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STUDIES IN MODERNISM

REV. ALFRED FAWKES



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STUDIES IN MODERNISM

BY
JIMMY HARRIS, PH.D.

STUDIES IN MODERNISM

A study of the development of modernism in literature and art, from the late nineteenth century to the present. The author discusses the influence of the scientific revolution, the rise of the novel, and the development of the modernist movement in literature and art.

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BY THE

REV. ALFRED FAWKES, M.A.

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“L'Évolution se fera, elle se fait, mais en dehors de l'Église et à ses dépens, non pas dans l'Église ni par elle, qui n'y veut point consentir.”

Choses Passées, p. 190.

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STUDIES IN MODERNISM

REV. ALFRED HARRIS, M.A.

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TO
JOHN LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD
WITH GRATITUDE CONFIDENCE AND RESPECT

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PREFACE

THE essays brought together in this volume have appeared: one in the *Hibbert Journal*, five in the *Quarterly*, and ten in the *Edinburgh Review*. It is by the courteous permission of the respective proprietors of these journals that they are published, with a few verbal changes, in their present form. The connexion between them is one of a common bearing. It is as associated, directly or indirectly, with the Modernist movement that the persons, events, and ideas dealt with are discussed. The earlier papers were written from the standpoint of a Roman Catholic, desirous, if not very hopeful, of reconciling the Roman Catholic standpoint with acceptance of the methods and results of historical and critical science; the later, from a position of greater freedom. But in all, the writer's aim was to see things as they were; and the difference between the perspective of the earlier and the later essays is slight.

As a movement, Modernism was a product of the *Interims-Pontifikat* of Leo XIII. Under either his predecessor or his successor it would have been impossible. Both were frankly hostile to scholarship and contemptuous of scholars. The relations between Pius X and Duchesne reproduce those between Pius IX and Newman; both were Popes of the Counter-Reformation—in its decay. Leo XIII was of another type. He was a Renaissance Pontiff; himself literary and artistic, he would be the patron of letters and of art. Politically, he was a Guelf. No Pope ever rated the prerogatives and possibilities of his office higher; different as were his methods from theirs, he recalls the Gregories and the Innocents who made Rome for a second

time the mistress of the world. He recognised the modern mind as a factor of the situation with which he had to deal. His mistake lay in thinking that he could change its direction ; he found that he had harnessed the chariot of the Sun. He retraced his steps, but showed a certain consideration towards those who had followed, or gone beyond, him on the dangerous path. The stars in their courses fought against Modernism, and he could not reverse their movement ; perhaps he would not have done so if he could. But, while he lived, individual Modernists were treated leniently ; he could not sanction, but he would not condemn. His pontificate was of the nature of an interlude. When it ended, the permanent forces at work resumed their normal action ; their outcome was Pius X.

It would be easy to overestimate the personal element in the change of policy which dates from his accession. It is probable that this affected its manner rather than its substance. A Leo XIV would not have broken with France, or organised the systematic delation and *espionnage* set on foot by the Encyclical 'Pascendi' (1907) ; neither his methods nor his instruments would have been of the type which commends itself to the present Pope. But the divergence between the Catholic and the Modernist position is fundamental. In every age a moderate school has faced the Papacy with a 'thus far, and no farther' ; in every age the protest has been brushed aside by the logic of ideas and of events. The Vatican Council did but crown the work of preceding generations ; it drew the conclusion contained in premisses successfully imposed upon, and accepted with practical unanimity by, the Church. This is the Achilles' heel of the Liberal Catholic. We need not apologise for the Reformation ; the acceptance of the Reformation standpoint is the first condition of reform. For there is no arguing with a theocracy. 'There can be no discussion,' an allocution of the present Pope reminds us, 'as to how far the duty of obedience goes ; no search for the point where this obligation ceases. There is no boundary fixed to the domain in which the Head can, and ought to, exercise his will. Against his authority that of no others

differing from him can be set, however learned they may be.’¹ The French ‘*Semaines religieuses*,’ which see in the Pope ‘Jesus incarnate afresh,’ do but translate the terms of theology into those of devotion. Their language, like that of Herod’s courtiers, has the merit of clearness. ‘*Qui potest capere, capiat*’: no more need be said.

But the technical strength of this position has been used in such a way as to disguise its moral weakness. The discipline of a Church, it is said, concerns only its members; if Catholics find Catholicism impossible, the remedy is in their own hands. Applied to a sect, such reasoning might pass; in the case of a world-Church it is misleading and even impudent. The affairs of a world-Church concern the world; the interests affected are too various and too far-reaching to make it possible to treat them otherwise than as matters of public and general concern. And, when all allowance has been made for the vested interests of its official class, a Church exists for a larger purpose than their maintenance and extension. The vision of a renovated Catholicism that floated before the eyes of Loisy, of Tyrrell, of Fogazzaro, and of others whose names it would be a disservice to them to recount, was one which they had a right to cherish, a dream which it was well to dream. If it was shattered against facts, so much the worse for facts that have ceased to be living. The days of an institution which can no longer adapt itself to its environment are numbered. This is overlooked by those who stop short at the contention that it was impossible for the Church to come to terms with Modernism. It may have been so. But, in this case, the inference is inevitable: the Church is near its end.

A Church, however, may stand for one of two things: its polity, or the men and women who compose it. In the former sense, Rome, it may be, will go the way of Alexandria and Antioch, formerly centres of the religious and civil life of continents—now shadows of a once great name. But the religious future of Latin Christendom—of the 250 million Christians who now look to Rome for guidance—

¹ Allocution to the ‘Apostolic Union,’ November 18,th 1912.

is another matter. For, whatever may be the case with its local and temporary forms, there is no reason to think that Christianity is incapable of adapting itself to the changed and changing life of the world. Its failure, in so far as it has failed, is, it seems, the result of the secondary in religion having been made the primary. Hence, in Rothe's words: 'Christum freimachen zu helfen von der Kirche, das musz in unseren Tagen eine der Haupt-bestrebungen der Gläubigen sein.' The reproach of sterility brought against this conception of Christianity is due partly to misconception, partly to temporary causes which are disappearing and at no distant date will have disappeared. In the reformed Churches, because of their more elastic structure, the transition from the letter to the spirit is easier than in the unreformed. But the comprehension of both under a common term is demanded; a Christendom which excluded either would be incomplete.

A. F.

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STUDIES IN MODERNISM

I. TYRRELL

THE life of Father Tyrrell is at once a study of temperament and a chapter of contemporary Church history. From the first point of view its psychological interest is great; from the second it is a document of exceptional importance. Its candour is entire; and the detachment of the biographer makes the irritating process of reading between the lines unnecessary. Miss Petre has said out all that there was to say with a frankness as honourable to herself as it is just to the distinguished man who, knowing where confidence was well bestowed, left his memory in her keeping. The trust has been discharged in the face of obstacles which might have daunted a less fine spirit; the terrors of the next world were called in to supplement the weapons of this.¹ Both were invoked in vain. Seldom has so worthy a monument been raised by a friend to a friend.

It is probable that the first feature, both of the Autobiography and of the Life, to strike the reader will be the complete absence of the usual characteristics of a religious memoir. The mannerism and pose of the professional pietist are wanting; and this is the man to the life. Had you looked for these things in him, you would have been disappointed; they were not there. He was very human, and was frankly not ashamed of being so. He

¹ *The Times*, November 2, 1910; *Histoire du Modernisme Catholique*, by A. Houtin, p. 326.

knew, having seen it at close quarters, that the attempt to rise above nature, ends, with few exceptions, in falling below it; he had had experience of the so-called 'supernatural,' and found it ugly and mean. 'I hope I am not humble, from what I have seen of humble men,' he used to say. The common life, the common lot sufficed him.

I would rather risk hell on my own lines than secure heaven on those; I would rather share in the palpitating life of the sinful majority than enjoy the peace of the saintly few. . . . This is tantamount to a confession of worldliness, which I will not defend by a perverse application of the text, 'God so loved the world.' Yet I have always been disposed to blame the Good Shepherd for having lost His sheep, and to suspect the prodigal's father of having made home intolerable to his son; and, similarly, I cannot help laying half the sins and errors of the world on ecclesiastical shoulders, and siding with the accused against their judges.¹

The Autobiography (1861-84) describes the writer's early life; the various influences under which he fell; his entrance into and first years in the Jesuit Order. The impression left is one of profound melancholy. He had taken the wrong turning; and each successive step found him farther from his destination. The years that the locust had eaten did but bring him back, worn and broken, to his starting-point; he ended where he had begun. Yet all, perhaps, was not lost.

It is a good life's work to have arrived by personal experience and reflection at the solution of so plausible and complicated a fallacy as that of Jesuitism. Even though I end weary and exhausted, at certain commonplace principles which are the public heritage of my age and country, made current coin long since by the labours of others, yet it seems to me that I possess them and feel them in a way that they never can who have had them for nothing, who have not worked their way through to them. . . . I look back with a sort of terror to the black wood in which for so many years I was lost, and from which God in His mercy has brought me forth to the light of liberty.²

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, i. 263.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 498-9.

His self-revelation differs from Newman's in being rather a confession than an apology ; as Newman was the most self-centred, Tyrrell was the most selfless of men. He looks at himself from without, as a spectator ; he might be a naturalist examining some strange form of life under the microscope, so destitute does he seem of personal interest in the result. Both were introspective ; but, while Newman's temperament was essentially Puritan—from the age of fifteen he 'held with a full belief and assent the doctrine of eternal punishment'—Tyrrell's was that of the curious Greek, interested for their own sake in life and mind. The Chthonian deities were not his.

I cannot remember any time of my childhood, or afterwards, when the fear of hell or desire of heaven had the slightest practical effect on my conduct, one way or the other. Even now (1901) it never enters into my calculations as an effectual motive ; nor have I, as a Catholic, ever cared or tried to gain an 'indulgence.'¹

His sensibility was extreme : he could not take the life even of an insect. 'When I lift a worm from my path, I say, "So may God deal with me." "Your heavenly Father careth for them," gives me warrant for my folly on this point ; and I do not care to amend.' His nature-sense was strong ; and he received impressions on the side of art more readily than on that of science. The sea, restless, loud voiced, and almost human in its changing moods, meant more to him than the remote and silent stars. Like all sensitive children, he led a secret life, the key to which only he who lives it possesses. Language is the setting of common and organised experience ; what is personal is inarticulate, and falls still-born, unless a certain Socratic midwifery is at hand. It is for the teacher to supply this ; in Tyrrell's case no teacher with the requisite gift presented himself at the critical time. He outgrew the 'picture-religion' of childhood, and found nothing to replace it. The invisible world offered no reality to his awakening reason.

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, i. 22.

If I wanted to excuse myself, I should say that the truth had never really been presented for my belief; that I identified it with the absurd anthropomorphisms of my babyhood, which my first reason instinctively assigned to the region of fairy-tales; that no one tried to show me the difference between the symbols and the realities symbolised. I fancy that much unbelief is due to this confusion; and that what men deny is not God, but some preposterous idol of their imagination.¹

To bring home to them this distinction is the problem of religious thought and the work of the religious teacher. But its difficulties, at least in our generation, are such as it is impossible to overstate.

His first interest in religion was intellectual. The Irish Protestantism in which he was brought up was not inspiring, and he did not separate its form from its substance; to the last, when he spoke of Protestantism, he gave the impression of not knowing what Protestantism is. Anglican ecclesiasticism offered an escape; but the path was slippery, and the first steps meant more than he knew. The starting-point given, the logic of ideas was easy; and it was checked neither by the experience of life nor by the positive knowledge which might have controlled it, and served as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the conclusions to which it led. The notion of system took possession of him. 'My first interest was in the very fringe and extreme outskirts of Christianity; and from these I was driven by force and need of consistency to its centre and core.'² Never was a better illustration of what may be called the fallacy of logic. The more accurately we reason from uncriticised premises, the farther we are led from the truth. For him, given the point of departure, the process meant Rome. This, he believed, involved 'intellectual suicide.' But it was the goal to which Anglicanism of the ecclesiastical type was 'an impeded movement.'³ A mind such as his at the time, speculative rather

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, i. 71.

² *Ibid.*, i. 102.

³ *Ibid.*, i. 104.

than devout, acute rather than well-informed or disciplined, was bound to reach it. Whether he would find it more than a temporary halting-place remained to be seen.

A theologian might argue, with a certain plausibility, that by his own showing he was never a Catholic except in name. He would be faced by not a few embarrassing consequences; but it must be admitted that Tyrrell's Catholicism was of an exceptional type. 'Certainly the Gods exist,' says the prophetess in the 'Symposium,' 'but they exist in a manner peculiar to themselves.' This distinction must be borne in mind when his Catholicism is insisted upon. He was a Catholic—the 'Reflections on Catholicism' in 'Scylla and Charybdis' are perhaps the most subtle apologetic for Romanism ever penned—but he was one in a way peculiar to himself. It can hardly be maintained that a man who 'entirely denied the œcumenical authority of the exclusively Western Councils of Trent and the Vatican'¹ was in any sense a Papal or Roman Catholic; it is difficult to think that the author of 'Mediævalism' was, in the sense in which the word would be used—say, by Lord Halifax—a Catholic at all. He compared 'spiritual things with spiritual'; and his language could be as iconoclastic as that of Knox or Luther; 'the worst of a Catholic church is' (he would say) 'that everything in it is a lie.' To make such words the premise of a syllogism would, of course, be misleading. The idea that underlay the symbolism of Catholicism was dear to him; what he meant was that this symbolism was often outworn, and concealed rather than revealed the idea. 'I should miss the facile absolution round the corner,' said a friend who had come near to finding the Roman system impossible. 'If you can believe that it does you any good,' was the dry answer. These things were the work of men's hands. 'Be not afraid of them, for they cannot do evil; neither is it in them to do good.'

He exchanged English for Latin Christianity, as so

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, ii. 383.

many have done, on a misunderstanding. And if we ask, 'To what purpose was this waste?' we may remember that he did a work in the Roman Church which could not have been done outside it, and which probably no one but he could have done. If his own life was broken in the process, he would not, we may believe, have taken this over-seriously. Caution was not one of his gifts; and of 'other-worldliness,' the besetting sin of pietism and pietists, he was frankly contemptuous. 'I am well satisfied with my destiny as a wheel in God's mill, and find sufficient reward in the interests of life, its ups and even its downs; nor would I willingly purchase so dull a thing as personal safety at the sacrifice of such entertaining dangers.' This was very rare, very fine, and, from one point of view, very perilous; he lived dangerously, and on the edge of things. To those for whom religion centres in the individual, his course will seem that of a wandering star; and, indeed, it may be doubted whether 'the joy and peace in believing' which lesser men experience were his. He would not, perhaps, have paid what is ordinarily their price. 'I could not bear to think that there were faith or moral difficulties pressing on others of which I knew nothing, and that I owed my stability to any sort of ignorance or half-view.'¹ His underlying doubts were never entirely dissipated; 'the ghost was there, and would rise at times'; and, 'after all, my theistic doubts had never been quite slain.'² The explanation was that he had begun at the wrong end. Theism is the foundation of Christianity; and, for Catholics, Christianity of Catholicism. For him this order had been inverted; the triangle stood on its apex, not its base. Hence a radical insecurity; the house was built on sand.

I, in my dark and crooked way, almost began with Catholicism, and was forced back, in spite of myself, to theism, practical and speculative, in the effort to find a basis for a system that hung mid-air save for the scaffolding of mixed

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, ii. 96.

² *Ibid.*, i. 113, 225.

motives which made me cling to it blindly, in spite of a deep-down sense of instability. . . . I sometimes think that, had I, in early years, heard nothing at all about religion, I should have sooner come to the truth than was possible when my mind was blocked up with symbolic notions that I could not rightly credit, nor my instructors explain.¹

His own salvation he never considered as more than 'a slight probability'; in his inner life as in his outer he was the leader of a forlorn hope. It is not for those who seek the safety of lower paths to throw this in his teeth. Yet he had abandoned the common life to lead it; the conflict of duties had led him from the high road into a by-lane. And retrospect was bitter; nature reasserted herself and claimed her own.

In 1879 he came to England with his friend, Robert Dolling. Dolling had an exceptional power of dealing with rough material; but neither his methods nor his associates commended themselves to Tyrrell's more fastidious taste. Ritualism of the shop-boy type repelled him. 'Take those things hence,' is his comment, 'and make not my Father's house a playground for fools.'² He had little taste even for Roman functions; the ceremonial seemed to him barbaric, the priests vulgar and coarse.³ But here, at least, was the real thing. If Rome were true, Ritualism was a counterfeit; if false, it was a sham of a sham. In a few weeks' time he had been 'received' by a Jesuit; and his connexion with the Order—we must take leave to call it his ill-omened connexion—had begun. 'Here was post-haste, and no mistake; from start to goal, from post to finish, in twenty-four hours. I had come out that afternoon with no intention of being received; I returned a papist and half a Jesuit.'⁴ He was a boy of eighteen, impressionable, temperamental, and young for his years. The intentions of those concerned need not be questioned. But is spiritual kidnapping too strong a word for the facts? He believed, he tells us, that 'the Society was moving with the sun, and

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, i. 112.

² *Ibid.*, i. 151.

³ *Ibid.*, i. 135.

⁴ *Ibid.*, i. 162.

not against it'; that its members were 'keenly alive to the religious problems of their age, and devoted before all things to the reconciliation of faith and knowledge.'¹ Never, surely, did the wish to believe carry any human mind farther from the credible! It was clear that nothing but disaster could come of an association resting on so grotesque a misconception of fact.

The English Jesuits, however, are scarcely representative of the distinctive characteristics of their Order. The days of Robert Persons and Edward Petre are over; and, though the policy of Pius X has led, in the Society as elsewhere, to a certain rise in the ecclesiastical temperature, this has been imposed from without, and is unlikely to survive the present Pontificate. Exceptions could, no doubt, be found, but the temper of the English province is moderate; and, had the local superiors been free to act upon their own judgment in the Tyrrell case, it is probable that matters would have been peaceably arranged. But their hand was forced by Rome; and their position, it must be admitted, was not easy. Temperament is out of place in a religious order; and in Tyrrell the temperament was the man. A friendly critic has hazarded the suggestion that he 'enjoyed himself hugely in his controversies with his superiors.' It may have been so; he was a born fighter, and his every blow told. The General, a stiff Spanish official, was as indifferent, it is safe to say, to the personal issues involved in the controversy as he was ignorant of its significance; the English Provincials, less ignorant and more sympathetic, were genuinely perplexed and distressed. The attitude both of the Irishman and the Spaniard lay outside their experience. But their instinctive question to each would have been that of Melbourne, 'Why can't you let it alone?'

His happiest time in the Society was an interlude of a few months spent in Crete under the late Father Henry Schomberg Kerr, an ex-captain R.N., and a man whom to know was to respect. The atmosphere of the college at Malta, to which he was transferred, was different.

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, ii. 463-4.

I was unutterably shocked and disgusted by the general tone of the community ; by the utter absence of all I had expected to find, and the presence of much that I should have deemed incredible. . . . The dormitories were patrolled in soft slippers by night ; the playground, the galleries, the outdoor offices watched with detective eyes. . . . To me it was quite new, and every sign of it was suggestive. The air seemed laden with sin and the suspicion of sin. As for the Society's spiritual standards and methods, these now attracted me less than ever. I thought, then as now, that the methods of prayer and examination were wooden, mechanical, and unreal ; and though some of those whom I had met were good and lovable, I could not see that this was in any way a product of the system, since the most observant seemed the most disagreeable and the least charitable.¹

Was it worth while to have come so far to find so little ? Was not this the lesson of the whole—that ' the Church ' is not a problem to be solved by the individual, but, like nationality, a thing given—a foundation on which to build ?

The Master of the Novices, under whom he was eventually placed, was the late Father John Morris. He was a man to whom many owe much ; and, if Tyrrell's picture of him is unpleasing, it must be remembered that it is one of the paradoxes of the ' religious ' life that this important post—perhaps the most important of the posts to be filled—falls so frequently in the distribution of offices to an incompetent or unsuitable person. By his novices, at least, he was feared rather than loved.

He had a rasping and caustic manner, and a smile that ill became the natural severity of his features ; and, like so many keenly sensitive people, he knew exactly how and where to wound, and was rather fond of displaying his skill. I have seen novices looking pale and ill with fright while awaiting their turn to go in to him for confession, or manifestation, or direction, or some other spiritual torture.²

The relations between the two were what might have

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, i. 183, 190, 191.

² *Ibid.*, i. 201, 208.

been expected; Tyrrell's career in the Society all but came to a premature close. For him its Shibboleth remained Sibboleth: 'he could not frame to pronounce it right.' He resented being slain at the fords of Jordan, and escaped by the skin of his teeth. Happier had it been otherwise! 'If you do not leave now, you will only give the Society trouble later on,' was Father Morris's warning to him; and he would add, when quoting it, 'Morris was right after all.' The thought must often have presented itself to those placed as he was then and later, How is it that the same position affects men so differently?—that one is taken, and another left? Take Father Henry Kerr. It would be impossible to find a more honourable, sincere and manly character. Why can I not do as he does? a man of another type will ask himself; and will often suffer acutely from the suspicion of some secret flaw or weakness in himself which makes him falter where others stand. The answer is that the matter is one of temperament and outlook, not of character. Men of unspeculative and uncritical mind are untouched by questions which for others cut at the very root of action and moral life. 'Je vois autour de moi des hommes purs et simples auxquels le christianisme a suffi pour les rendre vertueux et heureux; mais j'ai remarqué que nul d'entre eux n'a la faculté critique.'¹ With his mother's death (1884) the Autobiography ends.

All these lesser troubles are submerged by the memories of one that had nothing to do with these self-induced, artificial interests, but with those which spring from our God-given natural affections, and which even Jesuit asceticism can never wholly uproot.²

Here, rather than in the desolating *scoriæ* of ecclesiastical and theological controversy, speaks the underlying, the real man.

The first chapter of vol. ii (the Life), 'Character and

¹ Renan, *Souvenirs d'enfance et de jeunesse*, p. 383.

² Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, i. 278.

Temperament,' is a psychological appreciation worthy to rank with the Autobiography. It has been the writer's ambition that the man should stand out in her pages

just such as he was, with his strength and his weakness, his greatness and his littleness, his sweetness and his bitterness, his utter truthfulness and what he himself calls his 'duplicity,' his generosity and his ruthlessness, his tenderness and his hardness, his faith and his scepticism. If the sum total be displeasing to a few, his biographer may regret it, but I know that he would not.¹

Tyrrell was a man of strong views, which he expressed, on occasions, strongly. He was intolerant of convention, and would have scouted the notion that his 'position' limited his freedom either of thought or speech. His sayings were often startling enough. Speaking of the unwholesome sentiment too often encouraged by the confessional, 'If I had daughters,' he said, 'and if I let them go to confession at all—which is doubtful—I should make them go to a drunken priest, that there might be no nonsense of this kind'; and, of his relations with the Society, 'I am like a man who has married believing his wife to be a virgin, and has found out that she is not.' But these ebullitions were on the surface; a certain insight into the unseen was the anchorage of his soul. With it—the two are near akin—went a singular detachment not only from material things, but from the shadows cast by them—reputation, influence, the praise of man. Here he was peculiarly un-English. These things left him indifferent; he lived on another plane. He did not speak easily, or often, of religion; he disliked gush and was suspicious of anything like unreality; he left this side of himself to be inferred. He possessed what Renan calls 'le discernement des nuances'; but his mind, subtle as it was, was direct. He could be silent; but, if he spoke, he made his meaning unmistakably, sometimes disconcertingly plain. Nor was he a respecter of persons. 'The action of the Pope to Bonomelli is so purely worldly in its motive, and so cruel

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, ii. 2.

and brutal in its manner, that we must regard him as gone over to the *potestas tenebrarum*,¹ he writes; and to an English bishop who, he thought, had provoked one of his clergy into leaving the Church: 'God will ask his soul at your feeble hands.' He did not 'suffer fools gladly.' He was intolerant of flattery; to approach him as an oracle was the surest way to make him withdraw into his shell. To Liberal Catholics of the political type he was an incalculable element. He was built on lines too different from theirs to make co-operation, or even understanding, possible. 'The more educated, temporising Ultramontaniam' (he writes), 'that shrinks from an inopportune pressing of principles the world has unfortunately outgrown; that loves to rub shoulders cautiously with science and democracy; that would make a change of circumstances and opportunities pass for a more tolerant spirit,'² was not to his mind. Injustice and tyranny roused his indignation; his fierceness against clericalism was less intellectual than moral. With the ineffectual protest of the pietist or the politician against controversy he had little sympathy. He thought it a pose, and an insincere one; errors must be contradicted and truth upheld. And, as a controversialist, he could be vehement. Those who, like Cardinal Mercier, crossed swords with him, had reason to regret their temerity; since Newman there has been no such master of the craft as he. For him, the battle of Modernism, in which he took so prominent a part, was not one of correct against incorrect opinion, but of right against wrong, of the truth against a lie. And he fought not for his own hand, but for the larger interests compromised by that 'all-permeating mendacity which is the most alarming feature of the present ecclesiastical crisis.'

Those Modernists who put their trust in the spread of truth will labour in vain unless they first labour for the spread of truthfulness. . . . What would it avail to sweep the accumulated dust and cobwebs of centuries out of the house of God;

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, ii. 265.

² *Mediævalism*, p. 153.

to purge our liturgy of fables and legends; to make a bonfire of our falsified histories, our forged decretals, our spurious relics; to clear off the mountainous debts to truth and candour incurred by our ancestors in the supposed interests of edification—what would it avail to exterminate those swarming legions of lies, if we still keep the spirit that breeds them? . . . The only infallible guardian of truth is the spirit of truthfulness. Not till the world learns to look to Rome as the home of truthfulness and straight dealing will it ever learn to look to her as the citadel of truth.¹

‘Il ne faut jamais’ (says a recent writer) ‘exiger des prêtres la sincérité; quand elle est dans leur tempérament, ils rompent tôt ou tard avec l’Église, qui ne peut plus se servir d’eux.’² Hence the tragedy of his last years. The time, however, when he suffered most was not when he was in conflict with his Order, nor even when he was, finally, deprived of Mass and the Sacraments, but when, some years earlier, he had to face the questions raised by the miraculous element in the Gospel history. Was this a record of events, or the setting of an idea? A critical conclusion, he knew, could not be met by a dogmatic argument; yet the gracious traditions, shrined in art and endeared by association, lay very near his heart. He knew no peace till he had reconciled fact and feeling. The rest was not indeed indifferent, but secondary; and he would have assented readily enough to Gottfried Arnold’s maxim that ‘the true Church in every generation is to be found with those who have just been excommunicated from the actual Church.’

From the first there had been a life and an originality in him which suggested a larger atmosphere than that either of his Order or of the Roman Church. ‘The man who wrote that book will not die a Jesuit,’ said a shrewd observer, on reading ‘Nova et Vetera.’ The work contained nothing inconsistent with the strictest orthodoxy. But the difference of temper between it and, say, Rodriguez or De Ponte is unmistakable; they look different ways. He developed rapidly, passing through

¹ *Mediævalism*, p. 181.

² Houtin, *Autour d’un Prêtre marié*, p. 327.

what Miss Petre calls the 'mediating Liberalism,' represented in England by Mr. Wilfrid Ward, to the wider horizons and more profound thought of Baron F. von Hügel, a distinguished scholar who unites freedom of speculation with deference to ecclesiastical authority—both in an exceptional degree. In spite of differences of temperament and standpoint, this friendship was the decisive influence of his career. It gave his mind a new direction. Baron von Hügel is a man of European, as distinguished from merely English, culture; to have come into touch with him was to have left inland seas for the open main. New horizons opened; new stars shone overhead. The receptive Irishman, with his provincial and sectarian training, was introduced to a larger world—to the critical and historical schools of Germany, to the short-lived Neo-Catholicism of France, and, above all, to scientific method. Here was the Rubicon. Once passed, return was impossible; he had 'put away childish things.' A few exceptionally constituted minds may possess the combination of qualities which enables them to occupy the two positions, the traditional and the scientific, simultaneously. Tyrrell was not of their number. He had started on a road that had no turning; the end might be reached sooner or later, but it could be foreseen. For Catholicism represents an arrested development; to develop is, however unconsciously, to have left it behind. The successive stages of the conflict are of personal rather than general interest. His final break with his Order was the outcome of the famous 'Letter to a Professor' (1906);¹ his excommunication followed his outspoken criticism of the Encyclical 'Pascendi' in *The Times*.² In each case, as in that of Father Benecke, in 'Eleanor,' what he had said was 'what every educated man in Europe knows to be true.' That, as a Catholic and a priest, he was not in a position to say it may be admitted. But the admission is of doubtful benefit to orthodoxy; fact is the measure of dogma, not dogma of fact.

The inevitableness of the end does not, however, justify

¹ Since published under the title of *A Much-abused Letter*. Longmans, 1907.

² September 30 and October 1, 1907.

either the means taken to precipitate it or the action of those who bring it about. These must be judged on their own merits; the impression left by the tactics of the authorities both at Rome and in England is painful in the extreme. 'Valde timeo ne aliæ molestiæ te maneant post ipsam secularizationem, quas fortasse neque suspicaris . . . quæ necessario consequentur tuum novum statum et relationem cum auctoritate ecclesiastica,' wrote the General on November 25, 1905; ¹ it is impossible to doubt that the successive stages of the tragedy were deliberately planned. 'Agnosco stylum Curiae Romanæ,' said Sarpi when stabbed by an assassin. The weapons employed against Tyrrell were subtler; their aim was the soul. No petty slight, no pin-prick which could exasperate a sensitive temper was spared him; he was attacked in person and through his friends. And his assailants were unseen; there was a conspiracy of silence.² He was referred from one authority to another; everyone in turn endeavoured to shift the responsibility for the measures taken on to other shoulders—Jesuit to bishop, bishop to Jesuit, Rome to England, and England to Rome. It is possible that some of those concerned acted under pressure and with a certain reluctance. The excuse is a poor one. 'Vaughan would have been more ruthless,' said one who had followed the matter in detail; 'but one would have forgiven him, because one would have known that he was sincere.' Wavering Anglicans will do well to mark the contrast between Protestant and Catholic standards; the life of Tyrrell—and the same may be said of that of Newman—is a powerful dissuasive from Rome. That he suffered acutely is certain; if this were the object aimed at, it was attained.

The look of suffering and desolation that marked him during the first months after his severance from religious life and the rights of the priesthood was impressed not only on his face, but on his entire frame, and will not easily be forgotten by friends who saw him at the time. There was something

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, ii. 244.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 298-9.

of the child in his nature and appearance ; and in seeing him one thought of a child cast adrift in wind and rain and cold.¹

He complained little ; but it was impossible that certain obvious comparisons should not force themselves upon him : 'at times it makes me very angry when I think of the sort of men who are allowed to say Mass.'² On the other hand, there was a natural reaction, intensified by certain developments of Vatican policy.

I have felt the moral badness of Rome and the Curia so deeply and acutely these late years that I cannot take active service, as a priest, under such a *canaille*. . . . The Montagnini and Benigni³ revelations have extinguished every spark of respect for the present *personnel* of the Roman See.⁴

It cannot be denied that his insistent logic had led him far—not only from the formal teaching of Rome, but from the received orthodoxy of the Churches. He separated criticism from authority, theology from religion ; the two were in different kinds, and he carried out this separation with a disregard of consequences which may seem to some to ignore the difference between pure and applied science. In England, in particular, a certain distrust of Modernism showed itself as soon as it was seen—Englishmen, it may be remarked, took a long time to see it—that Modernism was part of the European mind-movement, and not merely a protest against the Pope. Tyrrell, however, was not English ; and he had been subjected to a strain of which Englishmen have, happily, little experience. The bow had been stretched to snapping point ; hence the violence of the recoil. To many it seemed that his 'vues synthétiques,' to borrow M. Loisy's phrase,⁵ placed religion in a truer perspective than any in which it has been presented

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, ii. 284.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 307.

³ Mgr. Carlo Montagnini, an agent formerly attached to the Paris Nunciature, the publication of whose papers (1907) threw a significant light on Roman diplomacy (cf. the *Nation*, April 13, 27, and May 4, 1907). Mgr. Umberto Benigni, a prelate who has rendered important services to the Vatican during the Modernist controversy by his singularly adroit management of the Press.

⁴ *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, ii. 340.

⁵ *Simplex Réflexions*, p. 19.

to our generation ; he had at once the sense of the past, in which Protestantism is so often wanting, and that of the present, in which Catholicism necessarily fails. His apologetic is, therefore, of the first consequence—Newman's, with all its brilliancy, is the merest sophistry in comparison—but they mistake who think that it can be exploited in the interest of the Catholic—perhaps of any, Church. Never for a moment did Rome so misconceive it ; from the first the Infallible gave no uncertain sound.

Here is, and will always be, the Achilles' heel of the Catholic reformer. Speaking of De Maistre's criticism of Jansenism, Sainte-Beuve says :—

' Il faut en convenir, il entame tout d'abord la place par le côté faible, par le côté non soutenable, par cette thèse dérisoire . . . qui consiste à se prétendre catholique romain *mordicus*, comme on dit, et malgré Rome.' And again, ' Si c'était par habilité, par tactique politique, je le concevrais encore ; mais, je le crains, pour eux c'était conviction entêtée : en ce cas—qu'on me passe le mot—*c'est bête !*' ¹

The words might have been written yesterday. That men so able and so acute as those against whom they were directed, and those to whom, in our own time, they may be applied, should so completely have misconceived the situation, is a striking illustration of the part played by the subjective factor in human judgments. The distance between the actual Church and the Modernist ideal is, in itself, no barrier to the realisation of the latter ; greater gulfs have been bridged. But an institution is limited by the law of its being. This, in the case of the Roman Church, is infallibility ; and infallibility means the arrest of life and the exclusion of change. This is the rock on which Modernism was broken ; and on which every attempt at reform from within must necessarily break. The older Liberal Catholics believed that Rome might yet come to terms with the modern world ; and, though the proposition that it could and ought to do so was

¹ *Port Royal*, iii. 230, 93.

condemned by the Syllabus of 1864, Harnack, writing of the Vatican Council, suggests that the weapon forged in 1870 may yet be the means of releasing the Church from the dead-weight of the past. Tyrrell saw more clearly. 'No sane Modernist thinks it for a moment,' he said; it seemed to him the most fantastic of dreams. He was aware that his position required justification.

May I ask you to pray for me? [he wrote in 1908 to the Old Catholic Bishop Herzog]. The position I occupy is one of great spiritual danger and difficulty; but, so far, it seems imposed on me in the interest of others. Nothing would gratify Rome more than my overt secession to the Anglican or old Catholic Church; and that gratification would be based on a right instinct that by such secession I had justified her position and facilitated her designs.¹

Other reasons against this course, 'not the sophistical reasons of popular controversy'—these he called 'traps for the ignorant'—are given in 'Christianity at the Cross-roads.' Opinions will differ as to their value; they will perhaps weigh more with those who view the matter from within than with those who view it from without. But under them all lay a predisposition; and this counts for more than argument. Argument comes from without. It finds itself in you indeed—or it fails to convince; but the external element, though assimilated, is not overcome. But a predisposition is yourself. If you want to change a man's religious or political opinions, go to work not at them—this is waste of time—but at his orientation. If Catholicism stands for the poetry of life to him, and Protestantism for the prose, then, supposing him a poet, no arguments will convince him; he will be a Catholic, disprove the Pope as you will. This is the key to much of the modern Catholic propaganda. The dogmatic basis has fallen into the background. The less said of it, it is felt, the better; it is accepted, nominally enough not for its own sake, but as a condition of something of another order—the romance of life, the totality of human experience, which

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, ii. 384.

(the suggestion is) is embodied in Catholicism, and ultimately in the Church of Rome. It is an extreme case of refraction. Not till the medium ceases to show the facts thus refracted can they be seen as they are. Now Tyrrell was obsessed by the idea of Catholicism. He believed that this idea could be embodied to a greater degree than, as experience shows, is possible. His temperament required a synthesis; and he was slow to think that, at present at least, no synthesis could be effected—that a spirit, a direction, a method must suffice. The Catholic and Roman Church contained, ‘in the poorest and shabbiest of earthen vessels’ indeed, this heavenly treasure; it stood, he thought, ‘for the oldest and widest body of corporate Christian experience, the closest approximation, so far attained, to the still far distant ideal of a Catholic Church.’¹ The shores of this heavenly country were, like those of Ausonia, ‘semper cedentia retro’; conceived as a polity, it was a dream. He would not, perhaps, have denied this. And it is difficult to resist the conclusion that his idea of the Church struggled with limitations and contradictions which it never wholly succeeded in overstepping; that the key to the grandiose conception of Catholicism is a spiritual unity in which differences are retained, but overcome. Stanley’s fine paraphrase of Arndt’s poem strikes a truer note. To the question ‘Where is the Christian Fatherland?’ it answers—

Thy Fatherland is wheresoe’er
 Christ’s spirit breathes a holier air;
 Where Christ-like Faith is keen to seek
 What Truth or Conscience freely speak—
 Where Christ-like Love delights to span
 The rents that sever man from man—
 Where round God’s throne His just ones stand—
 There, Christian, is thy Fatherland!

His state of ‘suspension mid-air’ could hardly have been lasting; the motives which led him to adopt it grew weaker year by year. Apathy on the one hand and

¹ Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, ii. 444.

unbelief on the other made havoc in the Modernist ranks. The movement might have been in the Roman Church what the development of a scientific theology has been in the Reformed Churches—a refuge for many from scepticism, a bridge between the old order and the new. Its suppression has played into the hands of indifference and unbelief. The unanimity with which the antimodernist oath¹ has been taken by men whose opinions are notorious is significant. If the history of the last ten years has shown one thing beyond doubt, it is the omnipotence of the Pope in Latin Christendom. It is impossible to imagine an utterance of the Vatican which would not be received by the Church with enthusiasm. The quality of this enthusiasm may be questioned; but men must be judged by their public statements, not by presumed private beliefs which they are too timid or apathetic to express. The Church is 'the Pope's house,' and he alone is master in it; Rome is Catholicism, and Catholicism is Rome.

Tyrrell's premature death makes speculation on what might have been his future unprofitable. There were times when he looked forward to the Christianity of the future as definitely non-ecclesiastical — consisting 'of mysticism and charity, and possibly the Eucharist in its primitive form as the outward bond.'² But it is certain that he had a strong and old-standing attraction, both of reason and feeling, towards the English Church. The Autobiography shows the light in which he regarded his secession. In 1905 he writes: 'The position I have come to in these last years is, in substance, more Anglican than anything else'; and, 'The Church of the "Christian Year" is, and always has been, my native air.'³ In 1908 these regrets reached their height. 'Who can dwell with perpetual burnings?' he had exclaimed in 'Mediævalism'; a return to the Church of his baptism would have been 'an unspeakable relief.' His case was

¹ Cf. Denzinger, *Enchiridion* (1911), p. 589.

² Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, ii. 377.

³ *Ibid.*, ii. 368-9.

not singular. How could it be so? The faith of many had been subjected to an intolerable strain. Among them were not a few, like himself, converts. Born free, the yoke of bondage was bitter to them; their secession seemed, at best, one of those false steps which, like an ill-judged marriage, can be remedied only by a mistake as great or greater. At this juncture a great opportunity was missed by the Anglican bishops. A national Church has a national calling; and Englishmen, as such, have a claim to the good offices of the English Church. It is the tendency of modern Anglicanism to ignore this, and to take up the lower, denominational standpoint. A word of counsel and sympathy, spoken in public and with authority, might have done much—it may be to recall reluctant exiles, in any case to revive faith then dying and since then in many instances dead. It was not spoken; what the latest historian of the English Church characterises as ‘the more than Gamaliel-like caution’¹ of the bishops blocked the way. Tide must be taken at the flood, if it is to lead ‘on to fortune.’ The opportunity passed, and will not return.

In Tyrrell’s case, it may be permitted to an English Churchman who knew him intimately to think that ‘*antiquam exquirite matrem*’ would have been the best and happiest solution, and that his natural home was in the English Church. ‘One cannot go on with a withered heart and a bitter taste in one’s mouth for ever,’ he wrote. ‘Why should I hold on to a body which hates me, and whose exclusive claims I no longer admit?’² Her historical background appealed to his temperament; her freedom and large horizons to his understanding. ‘The Church of England, while holding to the principle of Catholicism, has always opened her windows towards the rising sun.’ And, had he devoted to an examination of the position of the Reformed Churches half the ingenuity which he displayed in the construction of a purely abstract

¹ F. Warre-Cornish, *History of the English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, ii. 117.

² Petre, *Autobiography and Life of George Tyrrell*, ii. 369.

Roman Catholicism to which nothing in the world of fact corresponded or could ever correspond, he would probably have got nearer solving the problems which perplexed him. That those Churches lost something—much, if we will—by the Reformation is true. But neither the greatness of the deliverance nor that of the gain must be forgotten. And the history of the Roman Church since the Reformation shows, if it shows anything, that the gain could not have been secured without the loss. Nor has the loss been final. The values have been revised, and have come back to us ; time has restored what time had taken away.

If it is asked what is Tyrrell's precise place in the modern theological movement, the answer is that it is that of a constructive and conservative critic. He was not deterred by fear of consequences ; he followed where the thought led. But he was constructive in aim, and conservative in method ; like Burke, he viewed history and human nature as wholes. He distrusted

runaway solutions and spurious simplifications, that would force a premature synthesis by leaving out all the intractable difficulties of the problem ; that prefer a cheap logicity to the clash and confusion through which the immanent reason of the world works order out of the warring elements of a rich and fruitful chaos. The new must be made out of the old, must retain and transcend all its values.¹

His particular application of this principle is not ours ; and we may doubt whether it would have satisfied him permanently. But the principle itself—*ἐκ τῶν διαφερόντων καλλίστην ἁρμονίαν καὶ πάντα κατ' ἔριν γίνεσθαι*—lies at the heart both of thought and of things. The process of gestation is long and painful ; but it is by way of assimilation, not of exclusion, that delivery comes.

The negative peace of difficulties evaded and not conquered . . . spells spiritual stagnation and decay. Doubtless we must not make this a reason for remaining in a society whose badness is irremediable, or so excessive as to overwhelm and carry us along in its current. But it may be a

¹ *Mediævalism*, p. 186.

reason why a society of saints might not be the best school of sanctity; and why the better and the best men in a community must always expect to be at war with the inert and backward majority, and must strain every muscle to tow the passive, unwieldy barge up stream.¹

It is not perhaps only to the Church of Rome, or even to the Churches, that these words apply.

¹ *Scylla and Charybdis*, p. 186.

II. NEWMAN

MR. WARD'S 'Life of Newman' is a permanent contribution to Church history. It is the work of a lifetime, in the sense that his other works have been subsidiary to it; it is the centre to which they converge. For Newman was the sun round which the lesser luminaries of his system circled; their movement and light were derived from him. Mr. Ward has peculiar qualifications for the task to which he has addressed himself. He stands in the first rank of biographers; he has had access to full and authentic sources; and, above all, he is steeped in his subject. More than anyone of our own—perhaps even of Newman's—generation, he has assimilated Newman's mind. He has done so, indeed, with a difference. The temperaments of the two men are dissimilar. To the gusts of passion which shook Newman—to his sensibility, his indignation, his scorn—Mr. Ward is a stranger. He has adopted Newman's standpoint rather than his personality, his conclusions rather than the mental and moral process by which they were attained. This is why, when he writes *about* Newman, we have an exact but not a very lifelike portrait. We miss the movement of the original; the versatility, the fire, are gone. In the present work this want is compensated by the free use which has been made of the Cardinal's journal and correspondence. The unreserve with which these have been drawn upon is remarkable. It is notorious that during his best years Newman was distrusted by and out of sympathy with his ecclesiastical superiors. As Mr. Ward puts it, 'He saw too much for a man of action.' When Talbot wrote to Manning,

'Dr. Newman is the most dangerous man in England,' he expressed the view all but universally held at Rome. These strained relations lasted till the death of Pius IX; he made no secret of his opinion about the policy of that pontiff—a policy resumed, after the Leonine interlude, by the present Pope. A Catholic biographer must have been exposed to no small temptation to suppress inconvenient facts and to water down disedifying expressions of opinion; the more so as their publication can scarcely be welcome in quarters whose authority he is not free to question, and to persons who have means of making their displeasure felt. That Mr. Ward has exercised a certain discretion in the use of his material is probable; how his book will be received by authority remains to be seen. But his outspokenness is great. So much has been told us that it is difficult to think that anything of importance has been concealed. The result is a masterpiece of biography, a profoundly painful picture, and a criticism of the Church of Rome from within—a criticism, it will seem to many, more damaging, because it is unconscious, than anything that has come from the avowedly Modernist school.

Newman stands high among the founders of what may be called neo-Catholicism. The Catholic Church of the eighteenth century was a social rather than an intellectual or a moral force. It was part of the established order of things; it was neither aggressive nor propagandist; it asked no more than to be let alone. With the nineteenth came the reaction from the Revolution, represented by De Maistre on the political, by mystics like the Curé d'Ars on the religious, and by Newman on the intellectual side. The first saw in the Papacy the foundation of the social fabric; the second won men by a saintliness whose inspiration, little as it might be suspected, was independent of Church or creed; the third carried the war into the enemies' camp, exposing the weak points of popular Protestantism, and arguing for the identity of the notion of Christianity with that of the Roman Church. Newman was a great man of letters, and a master of English prose; his knowledge of certain sides of human nature was

instinctive ; he was a subtle and, within limits, an acute thinker ; and he was one of the most consummate advocates who ever lived. He possessed the temperament of the artist in an exceptional degree. This does not make for the happiness either of its possessor or of those about him. 'Deep natures' (says Mr. Ward) 'are not the most equable. There will be bitter as well as sweet. Where there is intense love and gratitude there will be at times deep anger, deep resentment.' He was not easy to live with ; Manning's view of him—and it was shared by more friendly judges—was that he was 'difficult to understand.' His transports of emotion were tempestuous.

Christie walked with him from Oxford to Littlemore when the great separation of 1845 was approaching. Newman spoke never a word all the way, and Christie's hand, when they arrived, was wet with Newman's tears. When he made his confession in Littlemore chapel his exhaustion was such that he could not walk without help. When he went to Rome to set right the differences with his brethren of London . . . he walked barefoot from the halting-stage of the diligence all the way to St. Peter's. When Ambrose St. John died, he threw himself on the bed by the corpse, and spent the night there.¹

Such a temper is not normal ; one cannot mistake the overstrain.

Newman had in an eminent degree the skill in verbal fence characteristic of the Oxford of his generation ; but his mastery of expression was greater than his knowledge of fact. In this respect he resembled Mr. Gladstone. Both had accustomed themselves to an 'economy' in the use of language to such an extent that plain men were often at a loss to know what they really meant. Reasoning meant more to him than truth, tradition than testimony. 'A fact is not disproved because the testimony is confused and insufficient' ; and, 'As if evidence were the test of truth !'² But in figures and modes and fine shades of meaning, he was an expert ; he analysed conceptions and refined upon

¹ Ward, *Life of Newman*, i. 21.

² *Essay on Miracles*, pp. 171, 231.

terms. Never consciously insincere, he constantly gave the impression of insincerity. You could not detect the fallacy, but a true instinct told you it was there. Hence the distrust inspired by 'that subtle and delicately lubricated illative rhetoric by which you are led downwards on an exquisitely elaborated inclined plane, from a truism to a probability, from a strong probability to a fair probability, and from a fair probability to a pious but most improbable belief.'¹

When we start with assuming that miracles are not unlikely, we are putting forth a position which lies imbedded, as it were, and involved in the great revealed fact of the Incarnation. So much is plain at starting; but more is plain too. Miracles are not only not unlikely, they are positively likely; and for this simple reason, because for the most part, when God begins, He goes on. We conceive that when He first did a miracle, He began a series; what He commenced, He continued; what has been, will be. Surely this is good and clear reasoning!²

From this position the advance is easy to 'the liquefaction of the blood of St. Januarius at Naples and the motion of the eyes of the pictures of the Madonna in the Roman States.' Hence the sense of insecurity with which his dialectical victories inspire us. The superstructure was brilliant, but it was built on sand. His life was one long crusade against the outlook over the world which he knew as 'Liberalism'; he left this Liberalism triumphant along the whole line. 'Now it is scarcely a party; it is the educated lay world,' he says himself in the 'Apologia' (cap. v). His name is associated with a movement which the English mind refused to take seriously, and which, while it has left a profound mark on the Anglican clergy, has driven a wedge between the English people and the English Church. He gave up all to follow his ideal; but, like the shores of Ausonia, as he advanced it retreated. The Church of the Fathers could not be reproduced in the nineteenth century. His conception of it, if unlike the

¹ *Philomythus*, p. 32.

² *Present Position of Catholics*, pp. 298, 306.

actual Church of England, was at least as unlike the actual Church of Rome.

Nothing shows more clearly how far we have passed from the Oxford Movement than the effort of imagination required to picture the Oxford in which it originated. Newman described it in 'Loss and Gain'; but it is a world very remote from us. Lord Coleridge writes of the Sunday-afternoon sermons at St. Mary's: 'There was scarcely a man of note in the University, old or young, who did not during the last two or three years of Newman's incumbency habitually attend the services and listen to the sermons.' We simply cannot reconstruct the situation. There has been no second Newman; but, if there were twenty, Oxford would not be affected in this way. It is not that there is less religion than formerly: it is probable that there is more. But it finds other modes of expression: the climate has changed. The distinctive note of the unreformed Oxford in which Newman was so dominant a figure was its provincialism; it stood outside the main stream of the European mind. German, in spite of Bishop Lloyd's efforts, was almost unknown; 'Phrontisterion' showed the level of speculative thinking; in theology every extravagance found a congenial home. As a divine, Newman did not rise above this level. His pulpit commentary on the massacre of the Canaanites—men, women, and children—by the Israelitish tribesmen under Joshua is typical. 'Doubtless, as they slew those who suffered for the sins of their fathers, their thoughts turned, first to the fall of Adam, next to that unseen state where all inequalities are righted.'¹ His dialectic, acute as it was, confined itself to the analysis of received terms and current conceptions. He did not attempt to go behind them; this, as David Lewis (who had been his curate) used to say, he would have thought wrong.

He had taken over from popular thought and Puritan tradition certain hard-and-fast antitheses—the religious and the secular, the supernatural and the natural, the Church and the world. These distinctions, taken abso-

¹ *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, iii. 187.

lutely, are misleading; they land us in a dualism which breaks up the essential unity of experience. More particularly is it fatal to the conception of movement in thought and in things. It sees the world as a series of fixed quantities; it forms stereotyped notions, corresponding to stereotyped objects of thought. But there are no fixed quantities in Nature, and consequently no fixed notions in thought. To conceive things in this way is to misconceive them. For us the world is a process: a thing becoming, not a thing become. To some this is 'a hard saying'; in religion, in particular, it cuts the ground (they think) from under their feet. For the theology which it offers is still in the making; it is subversive of preconceived ideas; it leaves many questions unanswered; it excludes, perhaps too deliberately, edification from its aim. It appears, consequently, inconclusive and half-hearted. Newman turned from it on both grounds; it offended at once his sense of completeness and his sensibility. His mission, as he conceived it, was 'one of relentless war against the "Liberalism" in thought that was breaking up ancient institutions in Church and State, and would not cease from its work till it had destroyed religion.' There have been times when it has seemed to be so; when good men have distrusted learning because 'a little learning' has proved 'a dangerous thing.' But the remedy has been not retreat, but advance; not less, but more knowledge: that twofold faith which has been described as 'faith in criticism and faith in God.' If it is too much to say that Newman never attained to either, it is certain that he never succeeded in uniting the two. Evangelical as his early training had been, he looked at Evangelical religion from without. The terrors of the law held him. He believed, but 'joy and peace in believing' were not his. In his sermons fear is a more prominent motive than love; God is presented rather as a centre of dogma than as a loving Father; the Gospel is not so much a message of salvation as a menace of judgment to come. He looked at Christianity as a creed—which it is not; and demanded from it a system—which it does not possess. And it was all or nothing.

Protestantism 'is but the inchoate state or stage of a doctrine, and its final resolution is in Rationalism';¹ the conception of religion as a vital process, a thing living in and with the life of the race and the individual, was one which he never reached.

The old High Church party had not died out at Oxford. It had become somewhat soaked in port, and stiff-jointed with Erastianism; but men like Routh represented a certain learning and tradition. They were in the succession of the Caroline divines; and behind these stood those great, if ill-defined, figures—the Fathers—to whose authority the Reformers had appealed. Here, it seemed, was the solid ground Newman was in search of. 'I ever kept before me' (he says) 'that there was something greater than the Established Church, and that that was the Church Catholic and Apostolic, set up from the beginning, of which she was but the local presence and the organ. She was nothing, unless she was this.'² This ecclesiastical conception of Christianity was the distinctive note of Tractarianism; and it was Newman's ambiguous legacy to the English Church—ambiguous, because it is capable of two interpretations, a spiritual and a material. 'Ecclesia spiritus, non est Ecclesia numerus episcoporum';³ and the unity which signifies is interior, one of direction and life. The permanent element in religion is not this or that setting which it assumes, and may discard, in history, but the Christian idea. It was, however, on its external side that the conception of unity appealed to Newman; it led him logically and inevitably to Rome. An external Church postulates an external ruler; an external creed an external exponent; an external revelation an external (and, by an easy process of reasoning, an infallible) court of appeal. The deduction is obvious; it is the premisses that are faulty. It has been forgotten that the conceptions employed are abstract, and have no corresponding realities in the world of things. The Catholic notion of the Church is an artificial construction; it exists for thought only. Apply it

¹ *Essays Critical and Historical*, i. 294.

² *Apologia*, cap. i.

³ Tertullian, *De Pudic.*, 21.

to the English or any other Reformed Church, and the misfit is palpable, the conception breaks down. With the Roman Catholic Church the want of correspondence, though no less real, is less obvious. Its great scale, its apparent antiquity, its lofty pretensions, and, above all, the magic of the mighty name of Rome, make it possible for those who are ignorant of one half of the facts and misconceive the other to fit them to the theory.

It seems a paradox to speak of ignorance in connexion with so eminent a man as Newman. But the Oxford of his time was, as has been said, provincial, and his learning, compared with that of men like Thirlwall or Milman, moderate. If, as Mr. Ward tells us, Döllinger spoke of his knowledge of the first three centuries as 'almost unrivalled,' it can only be accounted for by remembering that these centuries were not Döllinger's special period; and that at the time (1857) they were—particularly to Catholic scholars—an almost unexplored field. Pattison judged differently.

The force of his dialectic and the beauty of his rhetorical exposition were such that one's eye and ear were charmed, and one never thought of inquiring on how narrow a basis of philosophical culture his great gifts were expended. A. P. Stanley once said to me: 'How different the fortunes of the Church of England might have been, if Newman had been able to read German!' That puts the matter in a nutshell; Newman assumed and adorned the narrow basis on which Laud had stood two hundred years before. All the grand development of human reason, from Aristotle down to Hegel, was a sealed book to him. There lay a unity, a unity of all thought, which far transcended the mere mechanical association of the unthinking members of the Catholic Church; a great spiritual unity by the side of which all sects and denominations shrink into vanity.¹

This is why, great as was his weight with a section of the religious world—and even of this world it was but a section—the trained intellect of his time passed him by. To the representatives of English speculation and science, to the

¹ *Memoirs*, p. 210.

historians, the poets, the men of letters, who were his contemporaries, he was no more than a name.

Did he know what the Roman Church and her clergy were when he seceded ?

Urbem quam dicunt Romam, Melibœe, putavi
Stultus ego huic nostræ similem.

The rift soon declared itself, and increased with years. By the Old-English Catholics he was impressed favourably. They were not at all in good odour at Rome,¹ where less wholesome influences were in the ascendant ; but they were moderate, devout, and often well read. 'Everything I saw impressed me with the idea of *simplicity*,' he writes from St. Edmund's ; at Oscott he notices, good-humouredly, that the punch—'they said again and again that it was made of lemon and sugar'—was 'remarkably stiff,' and that he was obliged to dilute it freely ; at Prior Park, 'I do not think it is a school of perfection, but of sensible as well as earnest religion' ; Dr. Brindle is 'a gentleman in the true sense of the term.'² Even then, however, these old-fashioned priests were dying out. The needs of the growing Catholic body called for an increase in the number of clergy ; the substitution of English and Irish for foreign seminaries lowered both the training and the type. With this depreciation of standard went an exaltation of temper, an exaggeration of language, and an extravagance of aim. Wiseman's Pastoral 'from out the Flaminian Gate' was an example. Pius IX waged open war against civilisation ; Manning informed his Anglo-Irish clergy that it was their mission 'to subdue an Imperial race.' Ritual was developed ; novel Italian devotions were encouraged ; Faber wrote of the Mother of the Saviour as 'Dearest Mamma.' To Catholics of the traditional type, whether clergy or laity, these follies were profoundly distasteful.

To try to transform 'Englishmen into Romans,' was, in Lingard's opinion, as undesirable as it was impracticable. And he expressed the devout wish that the subject for discussion at Dr. Wiseman's *soirées* might be, 'How to send

¹ Ward, i. 174.

² *Ibid.*, i. 103, 104, 110.

away those swarms of Italian congregationalists who introduce their own customs, and by making religion ridiculous in the eyes of Protestants prevent it from spreading here.' ¹

Newman shared this view. He distrusted these tendencies; he recognised their futility, and foresaw their results. He was not, needless to say, what is now called a Modernist; he was not even, in the sense in which Acton was, a Liberal Catholic. He was, at most, a semi-Liberal: but from circumstances the leadership of the Cave of Adullam in which the disaffected congregated became his. When that egregious person Monsignor Talbot wrote to Manning, 'To be Roman is to an Englishman an effort. Dr. Newman is more English than the English. His spirit must be crushed,' the new Archbishop answered:—

What you write about Dr. Newman is true. . . . He has become the centre of those who hold low views about the Holy See, are anti-Roman, cold, and silent—to say no more—about the Temporal Power, national, English, critical of Catholic devotions, and always on its lower side. . . . I see much danger of an English Catholicism, of which Newman is the highest type. It is the old Anglican, patristic, literary, Oxford tone transplanted into the Church. It takes the line of deprecating exaggerations, foreign devotions, Ultramontanism, anti-national sympathies. In one word, it is worldly Catholicism, and it will have the worldly on its side. ²

Newman had no wish to lead the disaffected; there was indeed a time at which he inclined to the Roman side. When Faber and his community of Wilfridians joined him (1848), he threw himself, probably with a certain effort, into their ideas. He Italianised indiscriminately; he used deliberately hurtful and offensive language about the English Church. 'As years went on such language became less congenial to him,' Mr. Ward tells us; ³ and with regard to popular devotions he fell back upon the more sober view. But his

¹ *Life and Letters of John Lingard*, p. 353.

² Purcell's *Life of Manning*, ii. 322.

³ Ward, *Life of Newman*, i. 204.

credulity was amazing. He is indignant at a doubt as to St. Winifrid having carried her head after decapitation; 'we saw the blood of St. Patrizia half liquid, i.e. liquefying, on her feast-day'; he accepts the legend of the miraculous transit of the Holy House of Loreto—'if you ask me why I believe it, it is because *everyone* believes it at Rome.'¹ Mr. Ward complains that the whole philosophical ground for his readiness to believe was passed over by Kingsley without notice. It will seem to most of us that a philosophy which produces such fruits cannot be taken seriously. Nor is the habit of mind which it engenders speculative only; superstition passes over inevitably from the speculative to the moral sphere. Perhaps the strangest construction ever put upon a well-known Pauline phrase occurs in a letter² written by him at this period.

To feel yourself surrounded by all holy arms and defences, with the Sacraments week by week, with the Priests' Benedictions, with crucifixes and rosaries which have been blessed, with holy water, with places or with acts to which Indulgences have been attached, and the 'whole Armour of God.' . . . What can one ask—what can one desire more than this?

Contrast this with the interpretation given to the words by their author. The whole difference between Catholicism and Protestantism is here.

This phase of fetishism was not lasting. It seems to have been reasoned rather than instinctive; this is probably what Mr. Ward means by speaking of a 'philosophical ground' in connexion with it. With Newman reasoning invariably degenerated into sophistry; when he did not reason, he saw men and their motives, events and their drift, clearly enough. Any illusions which he may have entertained as to the wisdom of Rome were soon dispelled. No one knew what to do with him. He was placed in the College of the Propaganda with Syrian and Armenian seminarists—'a whole troop of blackamoors,' Father Neville calls them; he wonders 'what they will make of

¹ Ward, *Life of Newman*, i. 198.

² *Ibid.*, i. 241.

me, and whether they will find me out.' The state of ecclesiastical studies was a shock to him. 'He found, to his surprise, that both St. Thomas and Aristotle were out of favour in Rome. Philosophising in general was suspect'; they remembered Lamennais, and were confirmed in their distaste for ideas. Theology was in little better case. Perrone scarcely went beyond catechetics; no one read English; Dalgairns had to arrange for the translation of the 'Essay on Development' into French. This famous treatise had been taken up by certain Unitarian writers in Boston; and the American bishops were up in arms against it. 'Of course they know nothing of antiquity, or of the state of the case,' was Newman's comment; in Rome also they knew little, and, he found, cared less. Words meant much to them; ideas little. Their minds were full of contemporary controversies, which they viewed from the standpoint of policy. His language on Probability suggested Hermes; on Faith, Bautain; the Development theory started from the side of psychology rather than of logic; 'Newman miscet et confundit omnia,' was their view. The professors who 'are said to sway the theology of Rome are introducing *bits* (without having seen the whole book)—*bits* of my Essay into their lectures to dissent from. This seems very absurd.' It was. But had they read the book from cover to cover it would have made no difference: they had neither understanding of nor interest in these things.

The Essay was an attempt to meet an obvious difficulty. The traditional appeal of the Catholic apologist was to antiquity. The notion of the perpetuity of the faith was vital to him; he transported the beliefs and usages of the modern into the primitive Church. They were not there. 'No, no' (as Hooker says); 'these opinions have youth in their countenance; antiquity knew them not, it never dreamed of them.'¹ Newman was aware of this. But he was faced by a dilemma. Neither the Vincentian canon, 'quod semper, quod ubique et ab omnibus,' nor the obligation incumbent on Catholics to interpret Scripture 'according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers,'

¹ *Ecclesiastical Polity*, vi. 4 (13).

admits divergence; yet divergence there unquestionably was. He fell back upon the argument by which Petavius had reconciled ante- and post-Nicene, orthodoxy; the latter was implicit in the former, and was developed by the natural logic of ideas. Newman interpreted this theory in a wider sense and used it on a larger field. He granted large variations of teaching in the course of the Church's 1800 years. 'Nevertheless,' he argued, 'these, on examination, will be found to arise from the nature of the case, and to proceed on a law and with a harmony and a definite drift which constitute an argument in their favour, as witnessing to a superintending Providence and a great design in the mode and in the circumstances of their occurrence.'¹ Some such way of escape was forced upon him; but it opened a wide, a very wide, door. The Roman divines, shrewd men of the world as they were, saw this, and would have none of it; on the other hand, their knowledge of history was too small to show them the impossibility of the traditional view. They lived, after their sort, for the moment; they disliked discussion: things would last their time.

It is impossible to suppose that so acute a mind as Newman's had overlooked the applications of which his theory was capable. But it was none of his business to point them out; he used it for a particular purpose, and no further; let others see to the rest. His apologetic was often reckless. Of Transubstantiation he writes:—

I cannot, indeed, prove it; I cannot tell how it is; but I say, 'Why should it not be? What's to hinder it? What do I know of substance or matter? Just as much as the greatest philosophers—and that is nothing at all.' . . . The Catholic doctrine leaves phenomena alone . . . it deals with what no one on earth knows anything about—the material substances themselves.²

The formula is saved by being emptied of meaning. On such reasoning anything may be anything else, and everything nothing. Οὐ φροντὶς Ἰπποκλείδῃ. Perrone admitted

¹ *Development*, Preface to 3rd edition (1878).

² *Apologia*, cap. v.

the principle of development ; and Mr. Ward¹ argues that the difference between his view and Newman's was one 'almost entirely of expression.' No ; what Perrone meant was a logical unfolding : Newman, guarded as his language often is, held an organic process. For him ideas are 'still unfinished. The world is still in the making, and mankind is in the making too.'² The conceptions differ materially ; the latter admits of, and even invites, applications which the former excludes. A philosophy or a belief

necessarily arises out of an existing state of things, and for a time savours of the soil. Its vital element needs disengaging from what is foreign and temporary, and is employed in efforts after freedom which become more vigorous and hopeful as its years increase. Its beginnings are no measure of its capabilities, nor of its scope. At first no one knows what it is, or what it is worth. It remains perhaps for a time quiescent ; it tries, as it were, its limbs, and proves the ground under it, and feels its way. From time to time it makes essays which fail, and are in consequence abandoned. It seems in suspense which way to go ; it wavers, and at length strikes out in one definite direction. In time it enters upon strange territory ; points of controversy alter their bearing ; parties rise and fall around it ; dangers and hopes appear in new relations ; and old principles reappear under new forms. It changes with them in order to remain the same. In a higher world it is otherwise ; but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.³

So spoke Faust to Margaret in the garden ! Not only Roman theologians demurred. 'He places Christianity on the edge of a precipice, from whence a bold and strong hand would throw it over,' wrote Mr. Gladstone ; and Manning, then an Anglican : 'I am persuaded that Bishop Butler, if he were alive, would in his quiet way tear the whole argument into shreds. Is it not a refuge for the destitute, who can find no shelter in antiquity ? It seems as if the thought of the *regula fidei*, and the tradition of dogma, and the whole oral confession of the faith seldom if

¹ Ward, *Life of Newman*, i. 185.

² W. R. Inge, *The Church and the Age*, p. 36.

³ *Essay on Development*, p. 40.

ever crossed his mind.¹ They were right. Valid and inevitable as it is, the Development theory can only be used by those who are prepared to follow it out to its conclusions. Rome saw this from the first; and in our own time, though Newman's name was not mentioned, both it and his doctrine of Probability have been repudiated. In the Syllabus of 1907, and the Encyclical by which it was followed, the Church fell back upon the old lines.

Never was man so various. A primer of infidelity, said Huxley, could be compiled from his works. But so could one of belief; of Ultramontanism and Cisalpinism; of traditionalism and science. Each of these opposites appealed to a side of his complex personality, and he threw himself into each with ardour. This made him a *frondeur*; he was a man with whom it was difficult to deal. Mr. Ward compares his attitude towards the controversies of his day to that of Fénelon under similar circumstances. The comparison is apt. But we recall Bossuet's comment on his great rival: 'M. de Cambrai continue à faire le soumis de l'air du monde le plus arrogant.'² That his views were disapproved in Rome is not surprising. In Ireland his aim was to found a university; what the bishops wanted was a seminary on a larger scale. He desired to see Roman Catholics at Oxford; the Church, having pronounced against mixed education, declined to make an exception in favour of Englishmen of the upper and upper-middle classes. In 1870 he opposed the definition of a dogma whose truth he did not call in question; Rome, with a desperate logic, defined it and defied fate. Our sympathy goes out to him—how could it be otherwise?—as we read Mr. Ward's record of the rebuffs, slights, and insults which he experienced. *Incidit in latrones*. The story is not calculated to encourage secession; and, if we feel that he should have known better than to secede, that the bondage under which he suffered was self-chosen and one from which he could have freed himself, we may remember that a man is often his own gaolor; the tyrannies from which escape is most difficult

¹ Purcell, *Life of Manning*, i. 311-15.

² Cf. *The French Ideal*, by Mme. Duclaux, p. 191.

are imposed from within. Mr. Ward's contention is that these exterior trials did not affect his interior contentment. It may have been so. He protested that it was; and there is nothing to make us think that he ever questioned the ecclesiastical setting of Christianity, or the fact that this setting, if taken as authoritative, means Rome. But he made no secret of his disillusionment; and it is not surprising that he was believed to regret his secession, and even to have contemplated retracing his steps. He denied this in a vehemently worded letter to a newspaper; but, in view of his similar, and subsequently retracted, disclaimer of the famous phrase, 'an aggressive and insolent faction,' in his letter to Bishop Ullathorne, the contradiction is not conclusive. His good faith in each case is beyond question. But moods vary, and memory plays men false. What is certain is that, if his divine faith in the Church remained unshaken, his human belief in her broke down.

I have been accustomed to believe that, over and above that attribute of infallibility which attached to the doctrinal decisions of the Holy See, a gift of sagacity had in every age characterised its occupants; so that we might be sure . . . that what the Pope determined was the very measure or the very policy expedient for the Church of the time. . . . I am obliged to say that a sentiment which history has impressed upon me, and impresses still, has been very considerably weakened as far as the present Pope, Pius IX, is concerned, by the experience of the results of the policy which his chosen councillors have led him to pursue.¹

Buoyancy was gone for ever: 'confidence in any superiors could never blossom in him again.' His thoughts went back wistfully to his old friends, to Oxford, and to the past. The effect of this was far-reaching. He saw in the Roman Church the one ark of shelter from the flood of unbelief which, he thought, was rising and would rise 'till only the tops of the mountains were seen.' And now this ark, he saw, was unseaworthy. This was not the view of a malcontent. So strong an Ultramontane as W. G. Ward complained of 'our miserable state of

¹ Ward, *Life of Newman*, i. 388.

intellectual degradation.' 'The whole philosophical fabric which occupies our colleges is rotten,' he wrote, 'from the floor to the roof. No one who has not been mixed up practically in a seminary would imagine to how great an extent it intellectually debauches the students' minds.'¹ Acton spoke of 'an illiterate episcopate, an ignorant clergy, a prejudiced and divided laity'; Manning of 'the incapacity of the Holy Office, the essential injustice of its procedure and its secrecy.'² The system was shallow, pretentious, and worldly.

With the Cardinal [Wiseman], immediate show is fruit, and conversions the sole fruit. At Propaganda conversions, and nothing else, are the proof of doing anything. They must be splendid conversions of great men, noblemen, learned men, not simply of the poor. At Rome they have had visions of the whole of England coming over to the Church, and their notion of the instrumentality of this conversion *en masse* is the conversion of persons of rank. *Il governo* is all in all in their ideas. Such an idea is perhaps even conveyed in our Brief, which sends us [the Oratorians] to the upper classes.

The jurisdiction of the Crown in Council had been exchanged for that of Propaganda. What had been gained? Propaganda was styled by Newman himself³

an arbitrary, military power. Propaganda is our only Court of Appeal; but to it the Bishops go, and secure it and commit it, before they move one step in the matter which calls for interference. And how is Propaganda to know anything about an English controversy, since it talks Italian? By extempore translation (I do not speak at random) or the *ex parte* assertion of some narrow-minded Bishop? . . . And who is Propaganda? Virtually, one sharp man of business, who works day and night, and dispatches his work quick off, to the East and the West; a high dignitary, indeed: perhaps an Archbishop, but after all little more than a clerk, or (according to his name) a Secretary, and two or three clerks under him. In this age, at least, 'Quantula sapientia regimur!'

¹ Ward, *Life of Newman*, i. 473.

² Purcell, *Life of Manning*, ii. 583.

³ Ward, *Life of Newman*, i. 560.

He would not, however, go beyond passive resistance. Acton never forgave his desertion of the 'Rambler' at a critical moment. His own view was that circumstances tied his hands. He would not co-operate with what appeared to him 'an aggressive and insolent faction'; nor would he, on the other hand, act in direct opposition to an authority which, though misused, he believed to be legitimate, and which even Acton was not prepared to resist to the end. The same dilemma has presented itself in more recent controversies. Unless a man is prepared to carry it through, opposition resolves itself into a game of bluff between the two parties, which is at once futile and undignified. If he means to retract, when called upon in a sufficiently menacing tone to do so, he had better have held his tongue. That this was Newman's view appears from his comment on the Munich Brief of 1863. It is 'an intimation that we are simply to be silent while scientific investigation proceeds, and say not a word on questions of interpretation of Scripture, &c., &c., when perplexed souls ask us.' A strange attitude for a teaching Church! But 'I am not sure,' he concludes—surely with a touch of cynicism—'that it will not prove to be the best way.'

In 1863 his fortunes had reached their ebb. Had the end come then, 'his career would have lived in history as the saddest of failures; his biography would have been a tragedy.' The standards—social, moral, and intellectual—of his co-religionists jarred upon him. Cullen treated him 'like a scrub'; Manning he distrusted; Wiseman had been 'personally unkind by word and deed.' The *h̄thos* of Rome was hateful to him. He had been delated for heresy by an obscure English bishop; this was a reminder that he was in the hands of a power that might crush him, whose touch was 'like the pat of a lion's paw.' The thought of being summoned to give an account of himself before the Roman tribunals haunted him like an evil dream. It meant, he believed, his death. 'It was the punishment of Dr. Baines (1840-1) to keep him at the door of Propaganda for a year. This is the prospect

which I cannot but feel probable, did I say anything which one Bishop in England chose to speak against and report. Others have been killed before me.'¹ To these exterior fears interior conflicts were added; the extract from his journal dated December 15, 1859,² can scarcely be read without tears.

With Kingsley's singularly ill-judged attack, and his characteristically effective and adroit answer, the tide turned. Kingsley's main contention was one which has been widely held, and may be fairly argued. His blunder was his use of Newman's name in connexion with it; and the offence was aggravated by his refusal to withdraw his words. The 'Apologia' proved that Newman was a very much abler man than Kingsley—which no one who knew the two doubted; it does not prove more. But the pathos, the delicacy, the charm of his self-revelation placed him high in the regard of his countrymen, and of the sounder elements in his own Church. He became a person whom it was unsafe to attack. 'Every blow that touches you inflicts a wound on the Catholic Church in this country,' said the Memorial addressed to him (1867) by the English laity. It was notorious to what quarter the warning was addressed. The reaction which he had foretold had come. He was right when he said: 'I don't think that active and honest minds can remain content under a dull tyranny. It seems impossible that they can remain quiet under the supremacy of Manning and Ward.'³ For the rest of his life he was an immense reserve force in Catholicism. He was believed to have an answer for every difficulty, and a policy for every emergency. He invested the Church with a glamour which effectually disguised her true features: her unreason appeared reason; her narrowness breadth. More than any one man, he destroyed the Protestant legend; more than any one man, he created the Catholic myth. In detail both were unhistorical. But the perspective of the former was correct, and must be regained.

The Vatican Council brought out Newman's most

¹ Ward, *Life of Newman*, i. 588.

² *Ibid.*, i. 574.

³ *Ibid.*, i. 566.

characteristic qualities. He was not an anti-Infallibilist. He held the doctrine of Papal Infallibility as a theological conclusion—that is, as an inference from premisses, one of which at least is an article of faith. But he did not wish to see it defined. A definition of doctrine, he thought, was not ‘a luxury of devotion,’ but ‘a stern, painful necessity’; and in the case of Infallibility no such necessity had been shown. There was nothing inconsistent in this attitude. The great majority of Catholics believe—to take a parallel case—in the Assumption of the Virgin; very few, it is safe to say, wish to see this belief made a dogma of faith. Newman’s temper was conservative, and he felt for troubled consciences; the definition, he knew, would give rise to political and religious discussions and raise questions difficult, if not impossible, to solve. The tortuous policy of those who had engineered the situation disgusted him.

Archbishop Manning tells Mr. Odo Russell that its definition *has been long intended!* Long intended, and yet kept secret! Is this the way the faithful were ever treated before? Is this in any sort of sense going back to tradition? For myself, after meditating on such crooked ways, I cannot help turning to our Lord’s terrible warning, ‘*Væ mundo a scandalis!*’ Is it wonderful that we should all be shocked?¹

The Roman cardinals, Infallibilists as they were, and not over-scrupulous—as they had, rightly or wrongly, the name of being—protested against Manning’s lobbying. ‘*Non ita sunt tractandæ res Ecclesiæ,*’ said Cardinal Bilio; and the reproach, it seems, was not forgotten by the too zealous prelate to whom it was addressed.

Infallibility, though the most discussed, was not the only problem before the Council; the Canons dealing with Scripture and inspiration were calculated to cause the gravest anxiety. Newman ‘felt that they were drawn up with no adequate regard to the questions which were being raised by contemporary Biblical criticism.’² Of these the Bishops were profoundly ignorant: they were

¹ Ward, *Life of Newman*, ii. 297.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 293.

like children playing with edged tools, not knowing that they would cut, or with fire, not knowing that it would burn.

There are two new dogmas in what has been defined about Scripture—first that Scripture is inspired. In the decree of Trent the Apostles are declared to be inspired, and they, thus inspired, are the fountain-head both of tradition and Scripture. Bouvier, I think, says that inspiration in Scripture is not defined, though it is ‘certissimum.’ Secondly, that by the ‘Testamenta’ is meant not the Covenants, but the collection of books constituting the Bible, of which in consequence, as well as of the Covenants, God becomes the ‘Auctor.’ . . . It seems to me that a perfectly new platform of doctrines is created, as regards our view of Scripture, by these new Canons—so far as this, that, if their primary and surface meaning is to be evaded, it must be by a set of explanations heretofore not necessary. Indeed, the whole Church platform seems to me likely to be off its ancient moorings: it is like a ship which has gradually swung round, or taken up a new position.¹

Tradition broken down, assent replaced by evasion. Was it worth having come so far to find so little? Was it not impossible either for a Church or for the individual believer to stand outside the essential movement of things? After the definition, Newman hoped, it appears, for some concerted action on the part of the minority bishops. When none came, he consoled himself by the relative moderation of the formula. ‘Pius has been overruled; I believe he wished for a much more stringent dogma than he has got.’ And the fall of the Temporal Power in the same year seemed to him significant. ‘It suggests the thought that to be at once infallible in religion and a despot in temporals is perhaps too great for mortal men.’²

Newman’s elevation to the cardinalate under Leo XIII—an act at once wise and gracious—was one of the many hopeful signs with which the new reign opened; and it is pleasant to think that in the evening of his days the cloud lifted that had pressed on him so heavily and so long. It was, perhaps, natural that his friends should

¹ Ward, *Life of Newman*, ii. 294–5.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 380.

overestimate its significance. To the Pope, who did not know English, Newman was little more than a name. The appointment, he was told, would give satisfaction in England; and it was urged upon him by persons whom he wished to oblige. His policy was one of conciliation; he wished to establish a *modus vivendi* with civilisation, to make the Papacy (which had fallen into contempt under his predecessor) respected, to heal old sores. More than this he could not do—perhaps would not have done if he could. And his pontificate, important as it was, was an episode; with Pius X the reaction came. Newman did not live to see it. He passed ‘*ex umbris et imaginibus in veritatem*’ on August 11, 1890.

It is not to be regretted that, disillusioned as he was, and *injusta noverca* as he had found the Church of his adoption, he remained a Roman Catholic. The Reformation standpoint was not his; the fiction of Anglo-Catholicism could not have held him. ‘I can understand a Catholic turning Liberal; my imagination fails as to the attempt to turn him into a Puseyite,’ he wrote in 1868;¹ and though his influence led, and still leads, men to what he would have called Liberalism, a Liberal he was not and had never been. Manning was accustomed to say that temper had been his ruin. It would have been truer to say that temperament was the key to his career. It was temperament that led him to the Tractarian Movement, to Rome, and to anti-Vaticanism; the personal factor always plays the decisive part. The vulgarity of Ultramontaniam offended him; he was not of that world. The *entourage* of Pius IX left a bad taste in the mouth. It is impossible to conceive him taking part in such a correspondence as that which passed between Manning and Talbot, anything like an appeal to ignorance was distasteful to him; he was repelled by the ‘Univers,’ under Veuillot, and the ‘Tablet,’ under Herbert Vaughan. He saw that the policy of the Vatican was overreaching itself; it was in the interest of Catholicism that he minimised the Syllabus and opposed the Definition of 1870. And ‘*passus est humani aliquid.*’

¹ Ward, *Life of Newman*, ii. 71,

A less sensitive man than he would have resented the succession of slights to which he had been subjected by men notoriously his inferiors mentally and morally. He resented them deeply and bitterly; no one was less disposed than he to suffer gladly either fools or insolence.

He left a profound mark, both on the Church of his birth and on that of his adoption. The Oxford Movement meant a practical religious revival: more zeal, more devotion, more and—in many ways—more efficient work. But its foundation was insecure. In the world of ideas it was a negligible quantity; and though still dominant in the Church and among the clergy, there are signs 'that it has now about reached its height, and that it must soon begin to break up owing to certain internal contradictions which the enthusiasm of its adherents has hitherto masked or ignored.'¹ The discrepancy between the theory and the facts is too radical to be blinked; the more we learn of Christian origins the more clearly these point to another reading of history. Nor has it increased the influence of the Church in this country. 'It is necessary to insist (since the contrary is so often asserted) that the last seventy years of Church life have been for the Church a period of decline.'² The Church is weaker and Dissent stronger than when the Oxford Movement began. In the Church of Rome Newman's influence has been for breadth and moderation. His philosophy of religion has kept Catholics in the Church who would otherwise have fallen away from her; the doctrine of Probability offered a way of escape to those who were unconvinced by the 'proofs' of the Scholastics; that of Development to those who recognised the gulf which lay between primitive, or even patristic, Christianity and Rome. It may be a question how far it is desirable to keep men in a Church under a misconception of her teaching and tendencies. It is a compromise, and, like all compromises, inconsistent. But it has its uses, and may serve in a transition time.

Newman will live in literature as the author of a fascinating religious autobiography; in history as the

¹ W. R. Inge, in *The Churchman*, February 1912.

² *Ibid.*

author of the 'Essay on Development.' The book is a striking anticipation of the Evolution philosophy; the application of this to theology marked a turning-point in religious thought. To many he was, and is, a prophet. To others he was a false prophet, from whose influence they have detached themselves hardly and after many years. The English Church owes him little; he deflected her course for close upon a century. Anglicanism of the ecclesiastical type owes him much; more than any one man he was its creator. Catholicism owes him more: he restored its prestige and its poetry; like the pious sons of Noah he 'went backwards' and threw a veil over its shame. He was a great magician; his spells made the dead live, and called the things that are not as though they were. But the efficacy of such spells vanishes with darkness. 'I awoke, and behold it was a dream.'

Yet surely he was a great man, more surely still an unhappy one; the impression of melancholy deepens at every page. The might-have-beens of history are an unprofitable field of speculation. Mr. Birrell enlarges, plausibly enough, on the futility of the supposition that 'if he had not been brought up an evangelical, if he had learned German, if he had married, if he had been made an archdeacon—all would have been different.' Yet it is impossible to resist the conviction that the accident of birth placed him in the very time and in the very circumstances least propitious to the development of his genius on the lines of life. 'A Cardinal of the Roman Church is not, to say the least of it, more obviously a shipwreck than a dean or even a bishop of the English Establishment.' It may be so. But men may be divided into two classes, according as they face onwards or backwards. And the tragedy of Newman's life is that, with his rare gifts, his in many ways unsurpassed powers, and his unique personality, he was the father of them that look back.

III. LOISY

THE temper of eighteenth-century Catholicism differed in many respects from that of the Catholicism of to-day. It was learned, moderate, unaggressive. Religious and secular society had arrived at a *modus vivendi*: there was less talk about religion, but not, perhaps, less religion than now. If it be urged that the age was somewhat at ease in Zion, it may be answered that much depends on the way in which this objection is put. It possessed a sense of proportion, and, in general, of the harmony of existence; it took to heart the counsel of the Preacher not to be 'righteous overmuch.' Muratori was its scholar; Benedict XIV, lettered and urbane, its pontiff: the author of the Universal Prayer lived and died a Catholic; nor was his orthodoxy questioned by his contemporaries; it was a later generation that took exception to his 'Jehovah, Jove, or Lord.' Theology was coloured by the easy philosophy of the time. Neither went to the root of things, or possessed the inductive basis that has been laid by later science. But the practical conclusions of each were tolerable: good sense and good temper made up for defective method and imperfect knowledge of fact. The older Ultramontaniam had died out; the new was unborn: to those who looked back upon it, the age seemed like that of the Antonines—a golden age.

On this century, so tolerant, so progressive, so optimistic, the Revolution broke like a tornado, leaving destruction in its train. It passed: men rose and looked round them. Society, civil and religious, lay in ruins; the old landmarks, the old shelters, were gone. To reconstruct

was the first necessity. Unfortunately, those who threw themselves into the work of reconstruction forgot that not the structure only, but the foundations of the old world had been destroyed. Originally confined to the few, what was then called philosophy had become the property of the many; and, though social questions had more interest for them than speculative or scientific, the interests of Church and State were too closely allied for the politicians of the Restoration to be indifferent to its diffusion. As regards religion, this philosophy meant Voltaire and the Encyclopædists. Their criticism of Christianity was superficial; but it was obvious, telling, and, so far as the traditional position went, conclusive. Its solution of the problems which it raised was insufficient; these were deeper and more many-sided than it supposed. But, negatively, its victory was decisive; the solutions hitherto proposed and accepted were beaten out of the field. It was superficial because, and in so far as, the knowledge of the age was superficial; but it cleared the ground and opened out fields of research the existence of which had been unsuspected. And the horizons which these presented were infinite: men surmised continents untrodden and oceans unsailed.

In Germany this new theology was taken up in a spirit at once religious and scientific. As Hume had been the point of departure for Kant and the critical philosophy, so was the popular Deism of the Illumination for Herder, Schleiermacher, Rothe, and the generation of scholars and divines that followed them. The result was a construction, of which Renan, when introduced to it, wrote: 'Je crus entrer dans un temple. C'était bien là ce que je cherchais, la conciliation d'un esprit hautement religieux avec l'esprit critique.' It was certainly very different from anything to be found in France. The French mind is not interested in theology; it oscillates between ignorant belief and ignorant unbelief. 'Ici il y a superfluité et danger,' was De Maistre's comment on a treatise on the various theories of the origin of the universe: 'la Genèse suffit pour savoir comment le monde a commencé.' And,

writing to a friend who had had the bad taste to question the chronology of the patriarchs, he remonstrates—in the spirit of that eminent theologian, Charles II—‘Je veux vous dire une grande vérité : *l'irréligion est canaille*.’ Nor did the sonorous periods of Chateaubriand advance matters.

Dieu a dû créer et a, sans doute, créé le monde avec toutes les marques de vetusté et de complément que nous voyons. . . . L’homme-roi naquit lui-même à trente années afin de s’accorder par sa majesté avec les antiques grandeurs de son nouvel empire, de même que sa compagne compta sans doute seize printemps, qu’elle n’avait pourtant point vécu, pour être en harmonie avec les fleurs, les petits oiseaux, l’innocence, les amours, et toute la jeune partie de l’univers.

Glaire and Nicolas fell back upon the arguments of the preceding generation of apologists—arguments which had never been equal to the burden laid upon them, and were now as obsolete as flint muskets or crossbows. At Saint-Sulpice the venerable M. Garnier illustrated the history of Sarah, who, at the advanced age of seventy, inspired a susceptible Egyptian king with passion, by the analogous instance of ‘Mlle de Lenclos.’ If an improvement has been brought about since then, the impetus has come, not from within, but from without.

Via prima salutis,
Quod minime reris, Graiâ pandetur ab urbe.

It is German Protestantism that has pointed the way.

The Abbé Houtin has described the varying fortunes of the movement in ‘La Question biblique chez les Catholiques de France au xix^e siècle,’ a work remarkable for a quality rare in theological literature—namely, humour. This crops up in the most unlikely places—the headings of the chapters, the bibliography, the quotations, the notes. The heading of chapter xii, on the Flood, may be instanced.

Variations sur un grand miracle biblique : ‘le vrai miracle,’ le déluge universel, p. 179.—Le Déluge un peu restreint, p. 180.—Le Déluge plus restreint, p. 189.—Le Déluge très restreint, p. 195.—Un peu plus de Déluge, p. 196.—Pas de Déluge du tout, p. 197.

Or consider the following extract from a recent commentary on the Book of Revelation :

Ce qui achève de rendre cette prédiction—c. ix. 16—parfaitement réalisable, c'est l'invention toute récente du cheval-machine, du bicycle. . . . De plus, les versets suivants donnent à supposer qu'une partie de cette cavalerie pourrait être des automobiles armées en guerre.

In view of the recent and emphatic condemnation of M. Loisy's works, the note appended to this commentary will be read with interest : 'Ce livre porte l'*imprimatur* de l'Ordinaire.'

M. Houtin's humour, lively as it is, is scarcely such as to recommend itself to the authorities of his Church. These exalted personages do not like to be made ridiculous ; and, human nature being what it is, it is not surprising that a determined effort was made to prohibit 'La Question biblique.' The difficulty was that the book is almost entirely narrative. The author makes little or no comment ; he leaves the facts and quotations to speak for themselves. To condemn him would have been to pillory the dignitaries whose proceedings he records and the approved authors from whose works he gives extracts. More ridicule, if possible, would have been excited by the condemnation of the work than was caused by its publication : under Leo XIII it was felt that this would not do. This difficulty, however, has now been overcome. On December 24, 1903, 'La Question biblique' was placed on the 'Index.'

The history of apologetic, indeed, is scarcely edifying reading. The literature, whether of the Old or the New Testament, reflects the ideas of the age which produced it ; and theologians who, confusing history with dogma, insist on construing it in the terms of later belief and teaching, are put to strange shifts. No reconciliation is too forced, no expedient too desperate. The 'days' of creation were periods ; the facts of geology and anthropology were forced, as upon a veritable bed of Procrustes, into this or that arbitrarily preconceived frame. One orthodox writer found a prediction of Columbus and the

discovery of America in Isaiah lx ; another a revelation of the chemical composition of bodies in 2 Peter iii. 5 ; a third saw in the life of the embryo in the uterus, or of the frog embedded in early rock strata, a parallel to the experiences of Jonah in the belly of the whale. It would not be worth while to recall these ineptitudes were they things of the past. But this is not so. The Paris school-boy is taught in his catechism that the world was created four thousand years before Christ. He knows, from the instruction given him in the *école primaire*, that this is simply untrue. So with the 'days' of creation, the Fall, the Deluge ; and the list might be indefinitely extended.

In higher grade education, it is true, distinctions are drawn and a certain latitude of interpretation is permitted. But to the great majority, to those least capable of distinguishing symbol from content, the truths of religion are presented in myths whose literal falsehood is patent. 'Les historiens qui auront à expliquer comment le peuple de France a perdu sa foi traditionnelle, devront-ils négliger l'effet produit par de telles causes ?'

More than any other man, Renan brought the Biblical question into prominence. 'Philologue d'instinct,' he possessed in a rare degree the scholar's temper ; his literary power equalled or surpassed his scientific ; he was one of the greatest masters of style that ever lived. To a religious imagination he united a critical understanding ; a vein of mystical sentiment underlay his scepticism ; he retained the stamp of Saint-Sulpice to the end. His piety survived his faith. What made Catholicism impossible to him was the irreconcilable opposition which, he believed, existed between it and criticism.

Je vois autour de moi des hommes purs et simples auxquels le christianisme a suffi pour les rendre vertueux et heureux ; mais j'ai remarqué que nul d'entre eux n'a la faculté critique. . . . Ah ! si j'étais né protestant en Allemagne ! Là était ma place. . . . Mais dans le catholicisme il faut être orthodoxe. C'est une barre de fer : il n'entend pas raison.

From this view he never varied : Liberal Catholicism was

a contradiction in terms. His reasoning on the subject was abstract. 'C'est le philosophe qui a fait dérailler l'historien,' was the comment of a representative of the incriminated school.

Suivant lui, qui transige avec l'exégèse de M. Garnier est pire qu'un hérétique ; c'est un catholique libéral. Il faut ou expliquer les aventures de Sara par celles de Mlle de Lenclos, ou s'exiler du christianisme. On trouve actuellement des personnes graves qui croient pouvoir échapper du dilemme.

Hostile, however, as he was to Liberal Catholicism, he gave a powerful impulse to the work which Liberal Catholicism was and is carrying on. Knowledge is international, and knows nothing of frontiers. He brought the Spree to the Seine. Popularising the results of German scholarship, and adding to them those of his own, he made the facts known. 'Tolle, lege.' Many for the first time opened a Bible : men questioned, criticised, perhaps scoffed, but they read ; and, as they read, the difficulty accentuated itself. The received exegesis was impossible ; and the Church refused to supply, or even to tolerate, another. It was a choice, it seemed, between religion and truth. After Renan's death the distress and perplexity in which many found themselves were represented to Cardinal Meignan, then Archbishop of Tours. A scholar himself, he was sympathetic, but unable or unwilling to move in the matter. 'Il n'y a rien à faire,' was his answer. 'Tous ceux qui reprendront la tentative de Richard Simon seront écrasés, comme il l'a été par Bossuet. Les théologiens sont féroces.'

He added a piece of advice based on his own experience, and confirmed by that of those to whom it was addressed : 'Quant à vous, gardez-vous de vous compromettre. Vous vous briserez inutilement, et ceux qui pensent comme vous ne vous soutiendront pas.' A few, more courageous, or less hampered by official responsibilities, spoke with greater freedom. Mgr. d'Hulst wrote in guarded but unmistakable terms in the 'Correspondant' ; the Dominican 'Reveu biblique international,' and the 'Enseignement

biblique,' the latter due to the initiative of the Abbé Loisy, were founded. M. Loisy had been since 1881 professor of Hebrew at the Institut catholique, where the Abbé, now Mgr., Duchesne occupied the chair of Ecclesiastical History, and the Abbé Paul de Broglie that of apologetic. All three were marked men. M. Duchesne's lectures were suspended in 1886, the pretext being the part taken by him in the controversy as to the apostolic origin ascribed by legend to certain French churches; the students of Saint-Sulpice were forbidden to attend M. Loisy's courses after the publication of his 'Mythes chaldéens de la Création et du Déluge'; and the appearance of an essay, entitled 'L'Histoire du Dogme de l'Inspiration,'¹ in the 'Enseignement biblique' was final. In 1892 the connexion between the professor and the Institut catholique came to an end. 'Dic nobis placentia,' quotes M. Houtin: the comment suits the text.

Nor were things better at Rome than in France. In 1887 three notable works were placed on the 'Index.' Ledrain's 'Histoire d'Israël,' Lenormant's 'Origines de l'Histoire,' and Lasserre's translation of the Gospels, which had been published under the *imprimatur* of two successive Archbishops of Paris, and with the blessing of Leo XIII. It was a reign of terror; no one knew from day to day when or on whom the next blow would fall.

Il faut bien le dire une fois pour toutes, c'était un sort terrible, il y a quinze ou vingt ans, que celui d'un prêtre appelé à étudier et à pratiquer scientifiquement l'exégèse biblique, si ce prêtre avait l'esprit ouvert et la parole sincère. Ce qui se révélait à lui était un champ d'études immense et que l'enseignement reçu lui avait à peine laissé deviner; c'était le travail incomplet, mais énorme cependant, qui a été accompli déjà par l'exégèse protestante et rationaliste; c'était la résurrection, confuse encore mais qui tendait à devenir de plus en plus nette, d'une histoire grandiose, celle des origines chrétiennes, histoire que les siècles passés ne connaissaient et ne comprenaient pas mieux, comme histoire,

¹ Reprinted in *Études bibliques*.

que celle de la haute antiquité orientale, grecque, et romaine ; c'était la nécessité, pour les catholiques, de contribuer à cette résurrection comme à tout autre développement du savoir humain, sous peine de s'excommunier eux-mêmes de la société intellectuelle et de préparer pour l'avenir prochain une crise bien plus redoutable que toutes celles que la foi chrétienne a traversées depuis qu'elle existe.¹

In October 1893, the encyclical 'Providentissimus Deus' was published. This famous document bore on the face of it signs of compromise. Originally, it was believed, it had been drafted in conciliatory terms ; then, under the influence of the Jesuit Cardinal, Mazzella—theologically the evil genius of Leo XIII—revised in a temper the reverse of conciliatory ; finally, as so often happens, a middle course was decided on ; the papal utterance might, indeed, have been better, but it might, on the other hand, have been very much worse. It would have been unreasonable to expect it to take the critical standpoint. The Pope is not a professor ; the Church is not a university ; no one could have complained had the encyclical called attention to the religious worth of Scripture, and emphasised the 'scientia inflat' of the apostle. But it did more than this. The traditional view of the inerrancy of the sacred books was propounded in its most extreme form. 'Libri omnes atque integri . . . cum omnibus suis partibus Spiritu Sancto dictante conscripti sunt.' Their writers were employed 'tanquam instrumenta ad scribendum' : the notion of inspiration was defined in the precisest of terms.

Nam supernaturali virtute ita eos ad scribendum excitavit et movit, ita scribentibus astitit, ut ea omnia eaque sola quae ipse juberet recte mente conciperent, et fideliter conscribere vellent, et apte infallibili veritate exprimerent. Secus non ipse esset auctor scripturae universae.

At the same time concessions were made to natural science and even to history ; the 'vera artis criticae disciplina' was distinguished from the 'ars quam vocant

¹ *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, pp. xv, xvi.

criticism'; and the clergy were urged to the study of Scripture in the original tongues, availing themselves of all the assistance that modern research and methods afford. This was an effectual, though an indirect and unintentional, antidote to what had gone before. Thought has a natural logic: such studies, once entered upon, take their own course and carry men with them whether they will or no. At the time, however, the encyclical fell like a bomb among the progressives. They did not change their views or abandon their hopes; but nothing, they felt, could be done for the moment: they must wait. Official submissions were made, official compliments exchanged over the document. Then the real work began: theologians set themselves to determine its interpretation; to maximise and minimise, to supplement and evade. If in all this there was a considerable element of insincerity, the blame attaches less to individuals than to the system which introduces an alien factor, authority, into the things of mind. The two are contrary one to another. In the external sphere authority has its place and its necessity. In the internal it is, in the literal sense of the word, impertinent. The one answer which thought can make to it is to deny at once its competence and its jurisdiction: 'Woman, what have I to do with thee?'

Catholicism, however, is not in reality so rigid as it seems. Dogmatic in form, papal pronouncements are, as a rule, disciplinary in substance; dictated rather by political than religious motives, they impose submission rather than assent. In this case the victory of the traditionalists was barren; the current of ideas against which they set themselves was too powerful to be withstood. The submission of the Liberals was nominal. Old writers reappeared under thinly veiled pseudonyms; new periodicals replaced those that had been discontinued or suppressed. At the Catholic Congress of Fribourg (1897) the documentary theory of the composition of the Hexateuch was upheld by scholars of distinction. The Conservatives urged that this and similar opinions had been condemned by Leo XIII as 'portenta errorum.' If

they failed to elicit a new condemnation, they succeeded in stifling discussion: at the Munich Congress (1900) the section of Scriptural science was suppressed. From one point of view, it must be admitted, the Liberals were at a disadvantage; the ground which they professed to occupy was not their real ground. Their opponents were in the right in saying that they had not conformed loyally to the papal instructions: they had to choose between loyalty and truth. One course only was open to them; and, unable to express their real sentiments, their protestations of submission had a false ring.

Again, their opinions were taking them farther than they anticipated; the opposition between criticism and traditionalism is wider than moderate men on either side suppose. The 'gendarmes théologiques' had the instinct of self-preservation; like certain low organisms, they were sensible of a danger which they were unable to define. The fabric of theology—dogma, canon-law, ceremonial, all, in short, that distinguishes Catholicism as creed or polity as opposed to religion—is based on certain conceptions of the universe, certain metaphysical beliefs, certain views of history and experience which shaped themselves at a particular time, under particular influences, and were the outcome of a particular phase of human development. As the conditions which have produced them change, these conceptions, beliefs, and views change with them; and thus slowly but surely the foundations of theology are undermined. This process of undermining is gradual; it is not till it has reached an advanced stage that it is perceived. For religious thought is relatively stable; the stir of the outside world is but faintly heard in the sanctuary.

Gradual, however, as the shifting is, it is certain. The history of Christianity is a history of identity, but—or it were not history—of identity in difference; and, while the identity is underlying and escapes observation, the difference is on the surface and strikes the eye. Christianity has been in succession Jewish, Greek, and mediæval: no conceivable change can be greater than that which

transformed the Messianic movement of Jesus into the community of the Apostolic, and the Church of the post-Apostolic, age. But that the adoption of the critical standpoint implies a wide change in received religious conceptions is beyond question. What, for example, becomes of the theology of the Sacraments when the philosophical notion of Substance disappears? What of that of the Incarnation when that of Person is changed beyond recognition? Ideas, indeed, subsist under variations of conception and terminology; but this way of looking at things involves the admission that even our religious knowledge is relative, that our notions and terms are symbolic, that that which they symbolise is expressed inadequately in them and is greater than they. This admission, incumbent on the strictest theology, and made at least in terms by its representatives, is strangely repugnant to popular religion, which is

not merely well satisfied with its own notions, but with itself for entertaining them. It can better bear to be contradicted than to be treated as of no account. A philosophical Christianity which admits, but leaves below it, the popular formula, trenches upon the egotism as well as the prejudice of the community.¹

To go behind the traditional belief, to interpret, distinguish, qualify—this is what it will not endure. This dogmatic temper, common to the Churches, is accentuated in Catholicism, because here the acceptance of dogma resolves itself ultimately into an act of submission to authority; and authority is the distinctive mark of Rome. A striking example was given when, in 1897, the question was put to the Holy Office whether the authenticity of the so-called ‘Comma Joanneum’—1 John v. 7—could safely be called in doubt. The Congregation replied *negative*; the answer being approved and confirmed by the Pope. An ambiguous and unofficial explanation of this amazing utterance, stating that it bore on the theological, not the critical, value of

¹ Mark Pattison, *Essays*, ii. 302.

the passage, was communicated to the English Press. The distinction recalls the once famous opinion of Pomponazzi that what was true in theology might be false in philosophy, and vice versa. Neither then nor now could the subterfuge deceive any but those who wished to be deceived. What was obvious was that, in subject-matter, in which she claims exclusive competence, the decision of the Church was flagrantly—it is not too much to say, cynically—at variance with fact. Hence in the last years of Leo XIII, a complete deadlock.

Les critiques à l'heure présente ne sont pas qualifiés pour défendre les positions que Léon XIII leur reproche d'avoir abandonnées, ni pour faire valoir des preuves qu'ils ont naguère déclarées fragiles. . . . Les exégètes catholiques ne peuvent pas faire que la théologie d'autrefois soit la science d'aujourd'hui.¹

It is urged that all that Rome claims is the subordination of the individual to the community, that her soldiers shall not march without the word of command. Analogies are fallacious. The Church is not an army, but mankind viewed from the religious standpoint; and it is impossible to impose military discipline upon mankind. To speak of the 'rights of man' is to use a phrase open to misconception. Whether a particular man has a 'right' to act in this or that way is, generally speaking, a matter of circumstances. But in the circumstances in which we live there can scarcely be two opinions as to the prudence or even possibility of a policy of intellectual repression.

In some states of society, such as our own, it is the worst charity, the most provoking, irritating rule of action, and the most unhappy policy, not to speak out, not to suffer to be spoken out, all that there is to say.²

Free trade in ideas is a fact, not an opinion: ideas must be met not by force, physical or moral, but by ideas. The Catholic Church is an institution on so large a scale,

¹ *Revue du Clergé Français*, 1 juin, 1900.

² J. H. Newman, *Via Media* (1877), Preface, p. lvii.

and bound up so closely with the fortunes of mankind, that it is antecedently improbable that she will put herself into an attitude of permanent opposition to received knowledge. Hitherto what she has opposed has been advanced, not received, knowledge; as this has become general her attitude of opposition has been dropped or explained away. Future development will probably resemble that of the past.¹ But this consideration will scarcely help the controversialist. Rome claims submission as infallible: with the claim to infallibility that to submission stands or falls. And a dilatory and contingent accommodation to what may prove to be the results of science is a very different thing from infallibility. If all that can be said for the Church is that she is unlikely to put herself into permanent opposition to received knowledge, where is her divine prerogative? How does her infallibility differ from that of the College of Surgeons or the Royal Academy? Must we not conclude that Catholicism is a phase through which the Christian idea has passed in former ages, but from which it has definitely and finally emerged?

This is the conclusion of Protestant theologians. M. Loisy, in 'L'Évangile et l'Église,' disputes it; his argument being in effect this: (1) It is only by an unreal and illegitimate abstraction that the Christian idea can be separated from the Christian community. The two are correlative. The Gospel was born and has lived in the community: isolate it, and you have a ghost, not a spirit: life, movement, energy are gone. Further, (2) the attempt to represent any one feature of Christianity as invariable, and the essence of the whole, is unwarrantable. For, on the one hand, there is no part of the whole which is not variable and has not in fact varied; and, on the other, the notion of essence is abstract; it is the sum of the parts that constitutes the whole.

The first of these positions is true, and conclusive against an individualist theory of religion. The second, true in a sense, is scarcely the truth. Christianity has varied; but

¹ 'Mit dogmatischen Beschlüssen kann man sich stets abfinden' (Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, ii. 349).

the Gospel has subsisted under its variations, and is simpler and more unmistakable than we suppose. Whether M. Loisy has refuted Professor Harnack is doubtful. They are workers in a common field and towards a common purpose; to many it will seem that the points on which they differ are fewer and less vital than those on which they are agreed. Incidentally, however, M. Loisy has subjected Harnack's method and its results to an acute and suggestive criticism.

The Christian of to-day is faced by the difficulty that primitive and modern Christianity are two different things. He is inclined to assume that what he believes to be the fundamental truths of religion, and these only, constituted the original teaching of Christ, accounting for the rest by such causes as accretion, environment, degeneration, and the like. Working on these lines, Harnack and Auguste Sabatier have done a work for religion the importance of which it is difficult to exaggerate: clearing away the débris which blocked the entrance to the temple, they have given access to the shrine. Their method, however, is not beyond criticism. For the teaching of Christ contains other elements than those which we should now regard as fundamental; while, in the analysis, much of what is generally understood by Christianity disappears. The soul has been preserved, but the body has evaporated: Christology, the Church, her creeds, her sacraments are gone. M. Loisy, with the above-mentioned writers, takes the Gospel as relative; he assigns to later beliefs and institutions their historical place in Christianity; but he advances a philosophy of religion which accounts for their existence, for the Christian fact as a whole.

Great as Harnack is in history, his philosophy of history—especially of religious history—leaves something to be desired. He does not distinguish between the use and the abuse of this philosophy. Extracting from the Gospel a single, and, as he believes, a new and unchanging, principle—the belief in the Father-God—he tests everything in Christianity by its relation to this; it is the touchstone by which the rest stands or falls. On such a

theory what is over and above remains a problem. It is antecedently improbable, remarks M. Loisy, that so vast and complex a structure as Christianity can be reduced to a single article of belief or fact of feeling. What becomes of the residuum? Harnack disavows the notion that it is merely parasitic: 'Pathologisch ist hier nichts.' But, given his standpoint, it is difficult to give it other than a pathological interpretation. And the question suggests itself, Has he derived this standpoint from history? Or, having adopted it on other than historical grounds, does he unconsciously interpret history in accordance with it? 'L'Évangile a existé indépendamment de nous: tâchons de l'entendre en lui-même, avant de l'interpréter par rapport à nos préférences ou à nos besoins.'

The 'essence' of Christianity, if we may use the term in such a connexion, is not necessarily what Christians believe to-day, but what holds the first and largest place in Christ's teaching, the ideas which He preached and for which He died. So with the *κήρυγμα* of the first days. The fact in each case is, and must be treated as, objective. To take a parallel instance, we discover the 'essence' of Islamism not by selecting those of its component elements which recommend themselves to our religious sense, but those which, for the Prophet and his disciples, bulked largest in belief, conduct, and worship. Otherwise, with a little good will, we might identify the teaching of the Koran with that of the Gospel, both proclaiming as central the belief in the all-merciful and all-compassionate God. Again, *differentia* is not essence: to assume that the features which seem to us peculiar to Christianity, constitute its definition, is arbitrary. Monotheism, for example, is not peculiar to Christianity; but certainly it is of its essence, and stands in the forefront of its creed. Finally, a critical discussion of the text is a necessary preliminary to fixing, in Harnack's sense of the word, the 'essence' of the Gospel. What if the passages on which he relies are not, or are not in the sense in which he uses them, genuine sayings of Christ? M. Loisy is of opinion that two of them at least—Matthew xi. 27, and Luke xvii. 21—'ont chance d'avoir été influ-

encés, sinon produits, par la théologie des premiers temps.' For another view the reader may be referred to Weiss, 'Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes' (p. 157). But the question is an open one; and Harnack's argument, in so far as it is based on the authenticity of these *Logia*, is insecure.

The truth, however, is,—and M. Loisy is on strong ground when he insists upon it—that the idea of a gospel teaching or record independent of tradition is a contradiction in terms. 'On ne connaît le Christ que par la tradition, à travers la tradition, dans la tradition chrétienne primitive.' His sayings, ideal and institutional alike, come to us through the minds of his followers; of few, if of any, would it be safe to argue that we possess them unaffected by the medium through which they have passed.

Quo semel est imbuta recens servabit odorem
Testa diu.

Nothing has changed in Christianity, urges the Catholic. Much has changed in it, answers the Protestant. Everything has changed in it, M. Loisy retorts upon both. 'L'Évangile tout entier était lié à une conception du monde et de l'histoire qui n'est plus la nôtre; et c'est l'Évangile tout entier, non seulement sa prétendue essence, qui n'y était pas lié inséparablement.'

But the question may be regarded from another point of view. The notion of essence as something fixed and unchanging is part of the *damnosa hereditas* of scholasticism. It is not in particles of matter, few or many, but in the direction and impulse of life pervading them that the identity of the organism resides. Harnack appears to conceive actual Christianity as a husk enveloping a kernel; the fruit is reached by the removal, layer by layer, of the outer rind. This were to dissect a dead, not to observe a living, body; the shrine, rudely invaded, is tenantless, the deity gone. The fatherhood of God, simple as the notion seems, means at once less and more to us than it meant to the Christians of the first generation; and if the direction given by Christ constitutes an identity in

difference here, why not elsewhere also?—in the hope of the kingdom, in the ministry of the Apostles, in the Messianic character of Christ?

Pourquoi ne pas mettre l'essence du christianisme dans la plénitude et la totalité de sa vie, qui, par cela même qu'elle est vie, est mouvement et variété, mais en tant que vie procédant d'un principe évidemment très puissant, a grandi suivant une loi qui affirmait, à chaque progrès, la force initiale de ce qu'on pourrait appeler son essence physique, révélée dans toutes ses manifestations? ¹

The figure, indeed, changes, but the type is unchanging; the law which governs its evolution persists. The broad outlines of the whole, its characteristics, that by which it lives—these constitute the essence of Christianity; and this essence is invariable not in the sense that it does not change—it is always changing—but as being the principle of an organism which is identical with itself as long as, and in the measure in which it lives. For life is a whole, and in the whole.

La formule intégrale de la vraie philosophie religieuse ne serait-elle pas 'Dieu partout,' comme la formule intégrale du christianisme est: 'Le Christ dans l'Église, et Dieu dans le Christ'? ²

M. Loisy, it will be seen, is a philosopher as well as a critic; and his work is primarily a contribution to the philosophy of religion. But it is his criticism rather than his philosophy which has brought him into conflict with ecclesiastical authority. The latter it does not understand; of the former it sees only the negative side, being too unintelligent either to recognise that this is a prelude to construction, or to appreciate the necessity of the construction to which it leads.

Manner, too, goes for something in these matters. 'Tout d'abord,' says M. Gabriel Monod in the 'Revue historique,' 'ce qui a dû choquer ses censeurs, c'est le ton laïque du livre.' The note of M. Loisy's mind is impersonality; he sees in a dry light. There is no attempt at edification

¹ *L'Évangile, et l'Église*, Introduction, p. xxvi. ² *Ibid.*, pp. xxxiii, xxxiv.

or unction. He dissects, observes, registers, without emotion. His '*Autour d'un Petit Livre*,' which, with its irony, its literary art, its intense, though subdued, passion, recalls the '*Lettres provinciales*,' is the exception which proves the rule; ordinarily he is passionless, and treats the most burning questions with the apparent indifference of a physician diagnosing a case. The facts on which theology rests know nothing of sects or confessions; they are extraterritorial, the common inheritance of those who know. It is unnecessary, therefore, to define his position with regard to them. It is enough to say that, where he differs from Protestant writers, it is not because he is more conservative—he is often less so—but because he is more objective, less open to considerations of sentiment than they. It does not follow that he is always in the right as against them; feeling is sometimes truer than fact. But in concrete questions, where feeling is out of place, his judgment is not lightly to be questioned; he has an instinct for the actual which seldom leads him astray.

It is with regard not to the facts but to the inferences to be drawn from the facts that differences of opinion begin. The liberal theologian, face to face with the opposition between criticism and traditional belief, falls back upon the distinction between the varying and the permanent in religion. There is a '*Wesen des Christentums*'; we can separate the substance from the form. The eschatology of the Synoptics is form; the hope of immortality substance; the Easter message symbol; the life of the risen Christ, and our life in Him, the truth symbolised. The religious value of this distinction is greater than M. Loisy is disposed to admit; but he is in the right when he questions its historical validity: if it is not to be misleading it must be made with circumspection and under reserves.

Idealists at heart, we picture to ourselves a divine without a human, light without shadow, truth without alloy. And in religion, at least, we expect to find our dream realised: we wake with a sense of chill and disillusionment to find that here, as elsewhere, it is a dream. The actual falls short of the ideal. Our conception was

abstract ; in the concrete, the world of experience, good and evil, truth and falsehood, are mixed. He who lays stress on a preconceived idea of what a revelation is, runs the risk of rejecting the revelation should it prove other than he conceived it. Faith is not vision ; its object is a concrete symbol, not a pure idea. The Absolute underlies Scripture and religion as it underlies nature, no less and no more—or, if this seem a hard saying, no more, but no less. Here, as there, the attempt to mark out separate compartments for absolute and relative is vain. The two are inseparably fused together, the one being the vehicle of the other, but interpreting it inadequately and in part. To this rule there is no exception. If by the ‘pure’ Gospel is meant an abstract ideal teaching without time or place-colour, remote from circumstance and generally unrelated, then there is and can be no such thing as the ‘pure’ Gospel ; it never existed ; it does not and never will exist. Abstraction of this sort is the bane of theology. The point of departure is vicious, being a conception of what the Gospel, we think, ought to be, unchecked by reference to what the Gospel is.

‘L’Évangile et l’Église,’ to which ‘Autour d’un Petit Livre’ is at once a key and a supplement, may be regarded from two distinct points of view : (1) as a criticism of Harnack’s ‘Wesen des Christentums’ ; (2) as an essay in constructive historical theology ; and, though the latter is the more important of the two aspects, the former must not be passed over without notice. That Harnack is strongly, perhaps too strongly, under the influence of the Ritschlian antagonism to the philosophy which underlies religion, is true. Ritschl did incalculable service to theology by recalling it from theory to life. But the arbitrary and *a priori* character of the theories which called forth his protest against theory does not abolish the inner logic of facts. Thought is in things. What is important is that it should be read out of, not into, them ; that they should be allowed to speak for themselves.

So much for the general standpoint ; in particular, it may be admitted that Harnack has, to a certain extent,

allowed the notion of the Messianic kingdom to fall out of Christ's teaching. This is, of course, a matter of more or less. Passages might be quoted both from the 'Wesen' and the 'Dogmengeschichte' in which the notion of this kingdom is emphasised. What we mean is that, in the general view of Christianity presented, it takes less than its proper place. M. Loisy, on the other hand, has scarcely done justice to the distinction between the relative religious value of different parts, or aspects, both of the original Gospel and of later Christianity. Here, again, it is not a question of what is admitted in words, but of impression and perspective. The law of the whole is brought into such prominence as to obscure the freedom—a relative freedom, of course—of the parts. The individual reacts against, while he is acted upon by, his environment; and it is in the equilibrium between this action and reaction that normal and healthy life consists. Each of the two writers has something that the other lacks. The Protestant is quicker to seize the moral, the Catholic the historical, element in the data; the former has a keener instinct for idea, the latter for fact.

The significance of controversy, however, is passing; it is not on this side that M. Loisy's work possesses permanent worth. It is significant as being the most important defence of Catholicism that has appeared since Newman's 'Essay on Development.' It has in an eminent degree what that famous book had not—the judicial temper. Free from sophistry and special pleading, the Catholicism which inspires it is hereditary and religious, not political. Its atmosphere differs from that of the pulpit and the clerical press, of the 'Schola Theologorum' and of Roman Congregations, of conciliar definitions and papal encyclicals; these things are, from the writer's standpoint, not ultimate authorities in religion, but problems needing—often urgently needing—to be solved. History is the key to their solution: we understand a belief or an institution when we know how it has come to be what it is. The past, though the ancestor, is the remote ancestor of the present; the links that connect them do not lie on

the surface ; the dust of centuries must be removed to bring them to light. The results of this process of removal are startling, if not to piety, at least to prejudice. We are accustomed, for example, to suppose that we possess in the Gospels the *ipsissima verba* of Christ. M. Loisy tells us it is not so. ' Il ne reste dans les Évangiles qu'un écho, nécessairement affaibli et un peu mêlé, de la parole de Jésus.' The organisation of the Church, her teaching, her hierarchy, her sacraments, are only mediately and indirectly to be traced to Him.

Il est certain que Jésus n'avait pas réglé d'avance la constitution de l'Église comme celle d'un gouvernement établi sur la terre et destiné à s'y perpétuer pendant une longue série des siècles ; . . . en ce qui concerne leur origine, il en est, des sacraments, ainsi que de l'Église et du dogme, qui procèdent de Jésus et de l'Évangile comme des réalités vivantes et non comme des institutions expressément définies.

The distinction between historical fact and theological interpretation is vital.

On peut dire, sans paradoxe, que pas un chapitre de l'Écriture, depuis le commencement de la Genèse jusqu'à la fin de l'Apocalypse, ne contient un enseignement tout à fait identique à celui de l'Église sur le même objet.

The Christ of the Synoptic narrative is other than the Word of later speculation ; the two, if *unus*, are not *unum*. The latter, in whatever shape the figure is presented to us, Pauline, Joannine, or Nicene, is an interpretation of the former ; the formula in which this interpretation shapes itself is relative to the science, the metaphysic, and the psychology of its day. These having changed, this requires restatement : ' une traduction s'impose.' We have to do, in short, not with a stereotyped deposit given once for all, but with a living organism. The Gospel did not drop down from heaven ready-made : rather it was a seed planted in a definite soil, expanding, propagating itself, assimilating here, rejecting there, acted upon by sun, wind, and rain as they went and came.

This is the light in which M. Loisy regards the history of Christianity. That the Church has changed is true—in constitution, in teaching, in worship—but this does not touch her claims upon us. For (1) such change was in the nature of things; ‘le développement doctrinal chrétien était fatal, donc légitime en principe’: (2) it is not peculiar to Catholicism; ‘les apôtres se faisaient du monde et aussi de Dieu . . . une idée assez différente de celle qu’insinue la péroration de “l’Essence du Christianisme”’: (3) the teaching of the Church is for to-day, not for to-morrow; ‘les formules traditionnelles sont soumises à un travail perpétuel d’interprétation où la lettre qui tue est efficacement contrôlée par l’esprit qui vivifie.’

This, perhaps, is rather to describe than to justify or even account for the facts. To say that a development was inevitable is not to say that this or that particular development was so; there is an element of the contingent in human affairs. ‘Every stage of the long journey was necessary to the result, and survives in it as an essential element.’¹ But it is not easy to fit the facts into so rigid a frame. A Christology was bound to emerge when men reflected on Christ’s person and teaching, but not necessarily the Nicene Christology; the brotherly love of the first days inevitably crystallised into an organisation as the brotherhood became a church, but not necessarily into Episcopacy or the Papacy. Still less does it follow that there is a sufficient moral reason for these developments. M. Loisy’s philosophy of history is open to Jowett’s criticism of Hegelianism, that it is ‘a transcendental defence of the world’—in this case of the Church—‘as it is.’ In the hands of men of his own calibre the theory is safe from misapplication; but with many it will degenerate too easily into a denial of room for, and need of, aspiration. All may be left to the Time-spirit; for ‘what is actual is rational, and what is rational is actual.’

But a good man will not readily acquiesce in this

¹ Caird, *Christianity and the Historical Christ*.

aphorism. He knows, of course, that all things proceed according to law, whether for good or evil. But, when he sees the misery and ignorance of mankind, he is convinced that, without any interruption of the uniformity of nature, the condition of the world may be indefinitely improved by human effort. . . . The doctrine of Hegel will to many seem the expression of an indolent conservatism, and will at any rate be made an excuse for it. The mind of the patriot rebels when he is told that the worst tyranny and oppression has a natural fitness; he cannot be persuaded, for example, that the conquest of Prussia by Napoleon I was either natural or necessary, or that any similar calamity befalling a nation should be a matter of indifference to the poet or philosopher. We may need such a philosophy or religion to console us under evils that are irremediable, but we see that it is fatal to the higher life of man.¹

Two obvious objections to this conception of religion suggest themselves: one, which has already been raised by the supreme ecclesiastical authority—that, whatever else it is, it is not Catholicism; the other—and this is the more important of the two—that, whatever else it is, it is not Christianity—at least, as generally understood. That it is not the Catholicism of to-day is certain. That it is not the Catholicism of to-morrow is uncertain; this is for to-morrow to decide. Even to-day, moderate men suspend judgment. Eight bishops, it is true, condemned ‘L’Évangile et l’Église.’ But there are eighty-four bishops in France; and seventy-six, though invited, it is believed, by the Nuncio to associate themselves with Cardinal Richard, refrained from action. It would be a mistake to infer that these prelates approved of M. Loisy’s book; but it is fair to infer that they did not desire its condemnation. That Rome has spoken, tardily and, as it seems, under protest; that the machinery of the ‘Index’ and the Inquisition has been brought into play—this is immaterial to the real issue.² Action of this kind, decisive

¹ Jowett, *Dialogues of Plato*, iv. 328.

² The following is a translation of the letter communicating the fact of the condemnation to Archbishop Richard:—

‘By order of the Holy Father, I am to inform Your Eminence of the measures which His Holiness has decided to take respecting the works of

of the position of individuals, affects but little the future of ideas. These are independent of their advocates; they live their own life, pursue their own paths, develop in accordance with their own laws. Indirectly and in the long run they govern the world and mould the most stubborn realists to their likeness, because they create the atmosphere in which we all, realists and idealists, live. They run the gauntlet of opposition; their survival is the test of their fitness to survive. Whether the forward movement in Catholicism will proceed on the precise curve that M. Loisy indicates, time will show. But it has too many elements in its favour, it is too closely identified with the lines on which the world is moving, to be suppressed. Individuals may be crushed or driven into rebellion, but the cause is secure.

M. Loisy is a pioneer. A specialist in exegesis and history, to the untrained reader his conclusions will seem of the nature of a solvent; he is cautious, but it takes a scholar to appreciate his caution; and with all his caution he is a leader rather than a representative of the school to which he belongs. The net results of the movement towards a scientific theology with which he is identified, are seen perhaps less in his own works than in the raised level of knowledge outside the range of his personal influence. Positions hotly denounced twenty or even ten years back are now taken for granted. That a text-book written by a Sulpician and published under the *imprimatur* of the Archbishop of New York should ascribe to Richard Simon the honour of having been the first to

the Rev. Abbé Alfred Loisy. The very grave errors which abound in these volumes concern principally—the Primitive Revelation; the authenticity of the facts and teaching of the Gospels; the Divinity and the Knowledge (*Scienza*) of Christ; the Resurrection; the Divine Institution of the Church; the Sacraments. The Holy Father, deeply grieved and sadly preoccupied by the disastrous effects which are produced, and may in future be produced, by writings of such a character, resolved to submit them for examination to the Supreme Tribunal of the Holy Office. This tribunal, after mature reflection and prolonged study, has formally condemned the works of the Abbé Loisy, in a decree of the 16th inst., fully confirmed by the Holy Father at the audience of the following day (Dec. 17). I am charged to transmit to Your Eminence an authentic copy of this document, the grave importance of which will not escape Your Eminence.

‘R. CARD. MERRY DEL VAL.’

inaugurate the method according to which the questions introductory to the interpretation of the Bible should be handled,'¹ marks the advance that has been made.

Another case in point is Mr. Wilfrid Ward's significant 'Problems and Persons.' His tone is more distinctly apologetic than M. Loisy's. The latter is content for the most part to state his conclusions and indicate the methods by which they have been reached. Mr. Ward's purpose is to show that, while foreign to the letter, such conclusions are not inconsistent with the spirit of traditional theology.

My principal endeavour has been to point out that there is abundant room already provided by acknowledged theological principles for such developments in Catholic theology as these results [those of history and exegesis] may render necessary. The fault in the more conservative theologians has been . . . that they have not seen the full capabilities of their own principles, but have identified their utmost reach with the very limited application of them which past circumstances have demanded.²

However little theologians have analysed 'development' in dogma, the Church, he insists, has in practice admitted it; a growth has, in fact, taken place. And this not in virtue of a magical or semi-magical process outside the providential world-order, but under the operation of the universal laws that govern the history of mankind. Mr. Ward represents what may be called the right, M. Loisy the left, wing of Liberal Catholicism; but the differences between them are differences of temperament, of less or more explication of content. Mr. Ward would not identify himself with all M. Loisy's criticism, or M. Loisy with all Mr. Ward's apologetic. This makes the extent of ground common to the two the more remarkable. The exponent to a later generation of the religious philosophy of Newman, a philosophy which, because not fully developed by its author, has yet to be worked out and appreciated at its true value, Mr. Ward unites dialectical subtlety with a

¹ *General Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures*, by Rev. F. E. Gigot, S.S. Benziger, New York, 1903.

² *Problems and Persons*, p. xviii.

religious spirit and a conservative temper, indisposed to novelties as such, with a political instinct which teaches him what positions must be abandoned and what, perhaps with modifications, can be retained. No one, however, can read the signs of the time more clearly, or demand more decidedly elbow-room for thinker and thought.

It would be idle [he says] to deny that the 'new framework' in which we have set our conception of the universe has incidentally thrown theology into some confusion in all religious communions. Forms of theological expression fashioned at a very different phase of civilisation from our own, often contain the record of views which the present age has outgrown. Rejecting some of their more obvious implications, men may find themselves out of joint with the *formulae* themselves, and feel more or less alienated from the communions which preserve them. . . . On the other hand, the generalisation of the evolutionary process brings home to us the fact that each successive age has really had to do a similar work of discrimination; that the theology of no age has been unalterable or final, although the slower pace of its evolution in the past has prevented this fact from being unmistakably apparent.¹

The other objection may be put in this way. The tendency of conservative theologians is to level up—to raise, for example, Tobit's dog to the level of God and immortality. Grave writers claim the authority of inspiration for the statement (Tobit xi. 9) that this animal, on the return of his master, wagged his tail. Liberal Protestantism distinguishes. While holding firmly to fundamental truths, it relegates Tobit and his dog alike to the province of the infinitely little. M. Loisy levels down. It would be too much to say that he reduces God and immortality to the level of Tobit's dog; but he regards the entire content of Christianity as treasure in earthen vessels—the two, treasure and vessel, being not merely in juxtaposition, but, as it were, interfused. If this seems a construing of the supernatural in the terms of the natural, which blots the sun out of heaven and tones down the

¹ *Problems and Persons*, p. ix.

landscape to a universal grey, it may be answered that, to correct this error, which after all is one of the imagination, we must fall back upon the poets—who for most of us are truer teachers than philosophers or theologians—and learn from them that the world is diviner than we thought it, and God in Nature, ‘though we know it not.’ The answer, however, overlooks the fact that life is conditioned not only by the universal, but by the particular; that the law of the world—in theological language the will of God—is balanced and brought about by the will of man. To forget this is to substitute a mechanical determinism for the free movement and initiative of life. Doubtless there is a power of recovery in men and things; doubtless the gradual process of the interpretation of dogma will work in the future as it has worked in the past. But it is poor comfort to the passenger on the brink of the torrent to be told that, within the next century or so, the stream will be bridged and men pass over dryshod; what he desiderates is not a bridge to-morrow, but a plank to-day. A historian classes together two evils which, even in the Apostolic age, threatened the purity and peace of the Christian communities—‘Hierarchie und Häresie.’¹ The latter has been the special danger of the reformed, the former of the unreformed Churches. Had there been no organisation, the Gospel, it seems, had perished. Had there been no reformers—no Paul, no Augustine, no Luther—petrification had become putrefaction; the water of life, clear as crystal, a stagnant poisoned stream. Do we not come back here to the religious value of the distinction which, historically, we were compelled to treat as suspect? ‘The thing reveals itself; no one who has a fresh eye for what is alive can fail to see it, and to distinguish it from its contemporary integument.’² That which underlies this is simple, and it is the ‘Wesen des Christentums’; the union of the divine and the human in Christ.

Every religious communion has its strong and its weak points. The Catholic Church has been peculiarly

¹ Von Dobschütz, *Die urchristlichen Gemeinden*, p. 136.

² Harnack, *Wesen des Christentums*, p. 8.

successful in making the religious life accessible to the average man, and has thus retained, at least hitherto, her hold on the masses. A price, indeed, has been paid for this ; religion has been brought down to their level ; but it has not been paid in vain. In dealing with ideas she has been less successful. Her danger is what M. Loisy calls 'le scandale des intelligences.' No Frenchman, in particular, who has the interests of religion at heart will question his statement.

qu'il y a, dans le catholicisme français, trop de personnes et depuis trop longtemps, qui n'ont pas assez peur de scandaliser les savants. . . . N'ont-ils pas tranché pour leur propre compte, et trop vite, hélas ! le problème du Christ et le problème de Dieu, tous ces laïques instruits, qui, baptisés et élevés dans l'église catholique, s'en éloignent quand ils ont atteint l'âge d'homme, parce que notre enseignement religieux leur paraît conçu en dépit de la science et en dépit de l'histoire ?

The religious significance of what is called Liberal Catholicism is that it is an attempt to meet this 'scandale des intelligences' on the only ground on which it can be met—that of scientific knowledge of fact. Goodness, indeed, is greater than knowledge ; but goodness by itself, much more the exterior observance which is so easily mistaken for it, is an insufficient basis for religion : the world of ideas transcends the actual, but the actual is the touchstone of ideas. The question of origins is vital to Catholicism. It is idle to denounce M. Loisy for raising it. He does not ask, he answers it : the question is in the air. Whatever primitive Christianity was, it was not Protestantism, exclaimed Newman triumphantly. He was right. But it was not Catholicism either : it was the parent stem out of which later Christianity, Catholic and Protestant, has grown. The refusal to recognise this gives an air of unreality to average Catholic apologetic : the alternative is inevitable ; either the writers are ignorant, or they are insincere. The symbolism of Christianity, invaluable as symbolism, is false and mischievous when taken for the

thing symbolised. The one grace, said Martineau, which the Church seems never to reach is veracity. But, for a teacher, veracity is the essential grace : the Church must reach it, or she must die.¹

Viewed from this standpoint, Liberal Catholicism is a struggle for life or death. To those who look for quick returns it promises little. Its results are neither tangible nor immediate. It will attract no influx of converts ; it will make no appreciable impression on the masses ; it brings with it no sensible or material advantage, no political or social prestige. Some wanderers, indeed, may be recalled, some waverers kept from secession tacit or avowed. But these, though more in number than might be supposed, are the few. In general its work is indirect and gradual ; it is to create in Catholicism an atmosphere in which the modern world can breathe. This is the condition of the fulfilment of the Church's mission, and indeed of her survival. Religion is immortal, but the various shapes in which she appears are mortal ; the greater the scale on which these subsist the more lingering the process of dissolution ; but in the long run none can defy nature, the laws by which creeds and churches live.

Le catholicisme sera, par la force des choses, un parti, ce qu'il ne doit pas être, et un parti réactionnaire, voué à un affaiblissement incurable et à une ruine fatale, tant que l'enseignement ecclésiastique semblera vouloir imposer aux esprits une conception du monde et de l'histoire humaine qui ne s'accorde pas avec celle qu'a produite le travail scientifique des derniers siècles ; tant que les fidèles seront entretenus dans la crainte de mal penser et d'offenser Dieu, en pensant simplement, et en admettant, dans l'ordre de la philosophie, de la science, et de l'histoire, des conclusions et des hypothèses que n'ont pas prévues les théologiens du moyen âge ; tant que le savant catholique aura l'air d'être un enfant tenu en lisière et qui ne peut faire un pas en avant être sans battu par sa nourrice. Une formation spéciale et défectueuse crée nécessairement une mentalité

¹ 'Mochte darüber auch die Frömmigkeit Schaden leiden, es gab und gibt noch ein stärkeres Interesse als das der Frömmigkeit, nämlich das der Wahrheit.' Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, ii. 37.

particulière et inférieure, laquelle entraîne après soi l'esprit de parti, la défiance à l'égard de ce qui est vraiment lumière et progrès. La plus sage des politiques, la plus généreuse sollicitude pour les classes populaires, n'assureraient pas chez nous l'avenir du catholicisme, si le catholicisme, qui, étant une religion, est d'abord une foi, se présentait sous les apparences d'une doctrine et d'une discipline opposées au libre essor de l'esprit humain, déjà minées par la science, isolées et isolantes au milieu du monde qui veut vivre, s'instruire et progresser en tout.¹

The tendency of thought is to anticipate average opinion ; and it is by average opinion that the world is governed. Those who identify themselves with a movement in advance of it must count the cost. No man can serve two masters : credit, success, advancement will not be theirs. Their good faith will be denied, their motives questioned, their shortcomings—for they are human—proclaimed on the housetops, their actions misconstrued and misconceived. The good opinion and good will of their fellows will be withheld from them ; they will incur the hostility, not only of the bad—that were little—but of the good, of those whose virtues they respect and whose office they revere.

Saepe etiam sinit divina providentia per nonnullas nimium turbulentas carnalium hominum seditiones expelli de congregatione christiana etiam bonos viros. Quam contumeliam vel injuriam suam cum patientissime pro ecclesiae pace tulerint, neque ullas novitates, vel schismatis vel haeresis, moliti fuerint, docebunt homines quam vero affectu et quanta sinceritate charitatis Deo serviendum sit. . . . Hos coronat in occulto Pater in occulto videns. Rarum hoc videtur genus ; sed tamen exempla non desunt ; imo plura sunt quam credi potest.²

Nothing, we may believe, but an imperative sense of duty could induce a man to embrace the renunciations, the strife, the interior solitude which such a lot involves. The rewards of life are pleasant, the approval of those

¹ *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, pp. xxxiv, xxxv.

² St. Augustine, *De Vera Religione*, chap. vi.

about us is an incentive to action and a tribute to achievement with which no one who knows himself or human nature will lightly dispense. But the approval of conscience—in theological language, the praise of God—is better ; it must be chosen before the praise of men. And he who chooses this narrow path ‘ may feel a confidence, which no popular caresses or religious sympathy could inspire, that he has by a divine help been enabled to plant his foot somewhere beyond the waves of time. He may depart hence before the natural term, worn out with intellectual toil, regarded with suspicion by many of his contemporaries, yet not without a sure hope that the love of truth, which men of saintly life often seem to slight, is, nevertheless, accepted before God.’

NOTE.—M. Loisy was excommunicated March 7, 1908.

IV. LEO XIII

By the death of Leo XIII in a venerable and honoured old age a striking personality vanishes from the European scene. No one who has ever seen it can forget the transparent figure, so white, so frail, so ghostlike ; the nearest approach, it seemed, to a disembodied soul that could walk the earth, and mingle and converse with men. Yet in that feeble frame dwelt a masterful spirit, a tenacious temper, an iron will. These qualities rang out in his voice, which was resonant and sonorous ; they were manifest in the vigorous lines of his face and in his hawk's eye. He could be gentle, but he could show himself on occasion stern and even terrible ; he could be sympathetic, but he magnified his office ; he was imperious ; it was not good for those about him to anger him or cross his will. It is scarcely to anticipate the verdict of history to say that his was a great pontificate. Perhaps, had it ended earlier, it might have been greater. Certainly the unusual length of the last two pontificates has not been an unmixed blessing. In the case of Pius IX it resulted in the stereotyping of the attitude of the exile of Gaeta for a generation ; in that of Leo XIII, as years increased upon him, the malaria, which hangs about the base of the rock of Peter, mounted higher ; the least worthy elements of the theocratic bureaucracy which has its centre in the Vatican assumed the upper hand. A man of ninety, however marvellous his vitality, has outlived himself ; he falls inevitably into the hands of others, and hears and speaks through them. Nor, should he on rare occasions act, or endeavour to act, on his own initiative, are his faculties equal to the demand made on them ; he is moved, though he appears to move. From another point of view

great age and long tenure of office remove a Pope, in the imagination of those at least to whom he is a distant figure, from the realm of the actual into that of the mythical ; a process of apotheosis takes place. The adulation which attached itself to Pius IX—nor did his successor wholly escape it—was as unprecedented as it was unwholesome ; the least word uttered by the oracle was greeted with the acclamation, ‘ It is the voice of a god, not of a man.’ Flattery carried to this pitch is Byzantine, not Roman ; a return to simpler habits of thought and speech is to be desired.

A great office moulds those who hold it ; it is rather it that possesses them than they who possess it. Nowhere is this more manifestly true than in the case of the Papacy. The Pope represents the static rather than the dynamic element in Christianity ; the polity not the idea. He is before everything an official, a functionary. This is so, irrespective of the personality of the individual. Behind the Roman Pontiff lies the Roman Church, which was before, and will be after, him ; he is its mouthpiece, and teaches, for all his infallibility, not ‘ as one having authority,’ but ‘ as the scribes.’ Those have been the greatest Popes whose natural bent has been to system—canonists like Benedict XIV, organisers like Sixtus V, diplomatists like Leo XIII,—these have been able to merge themselves in their necessarily routine work, and to leave their mark on administration. An idealist, on the other hand, is out of place in the Chair of Peter. For one Celestine V, who had the courage to make the *gran rifiuto*, how many of like temper, realising too late that the position in which they found themselves was a false one, have beaten their wings in vain against the bars which, gilded as they were, stood between them and the freedom of their native sky ! No regrets of this sort, it is safe to say, disturbed Leo XIII. He was endowed in a rare degree with the qualities which his office demanded, nor was he without their defects.

Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer,

his were the hard rather than the gentler virtues : he was obstinate and quick to anger ; he did not easily forgive. An

indefatigable worker, he was as unsparing of himself as of others : his personal activity, indeed, was excessive ; he desired to take direct cognisance of everything that was done in his name. The work of the Holy See is beyond any one man's supervision : this meant that he took action often on insufficient knowledge : a division of labour would have brought about better results. His life was of the simplest ; the shortest sleep, the most sparing food, sufficed him. If, as the persistent rumour of Rome would have it, he loved money, it was for public not for private uses ; for a purpose that appealed to him—for art, for literature, to secure a political advantage—he could be lavish ; if he hoarded, his hoarding was a means, not an end. By temperament a man of tradition and precedent, he was able on occasion not, indeed, to break away from them but to bend them to his will. He was sanguine, and, like most sanguine people, took short views. Convince him that a purpose which he had at heart could be brought about in his own time, and there was no sacrifice or concession that he would not make to secure it ; on the other hand, the prospect of a remote advantage, one to be attained in the next generation or century, left him unmoved. His temper was arbitrary, and the submission which he exacted from the highest dignitaries little short of servile : the humiliating retraction of what was, at most, an indiscretion imposed early in the pontificate on the learned and venerable Cardinal Pitra made a painful impression ; the penalty, it was felt, was one which no generous man would inflict and no self-respecting man endure. Pius IX inspired personal affection : think as you would of the Pontiff, you loved the man. With Leo it was not so. He was wanting in geniality ; his kindness—and he could be kind—was not instinctive ; a certain egotism and self-sufficiency wrapped him round. Intellectually he was a lettered Italian of an almost extinct type. He had a taste for Latin composition, writing prose tolerably and verse indifferently ; his knowledge of scholastic theology was above the average ; his earlier encyclicals, particularly those dealing with social and economic questions, were weighty in substance and

dignified in form. To naturally good parts he united the wisdom of age and experience. His judgment was rather practical than speculative : he stood outside the contemporary development of history and criticism, and he resented the idea of there being knowledge that he did not know. Perhaps, also, he was not without an old man's distrust of novelty. 'Is there anything in this Higher Criticism?' he asked a French bishop; and being told 'Much!' 'God help us!' he exclaimed. 'What are we coming to?' His conception of the relation of authority to thought was primitive : 'We deem it Our duty to put an end to the controversy,' he said in the encyclical '*Graves de communi*' (1901), 'by defining what Catholics *ought to think*.' The '*Providentissimus Deus*' (1893), he believed, had said the last word on the Biblical question; the later decree '*Vigilantiæ*' (1902), while, by the appointment of a special commission, it recognises its continued existence, in no way retracts or modifies the teaching of the earlier document, which remains authoritative and in force. With many men the burden of the Papacy would lead to a moderate view of its prerogative : it is easier to believe that the Pope is infallible when one is not Pope. Leo XIII was impervious to hesitations of this kind. No one who has watched him in a function in St. Peter's or the Sistine could question the sincerity of his belief, which he would have held as undoubtingly had he been the only man in the vast assembly to entertain it, that he was '*potestate Petrus, unctione Christus*,' the representative of God on earth. A psychological paradox; but it was so : he spoke and moved as one informed by a spirit greater than he. He began his reign as a reformer : in the old age of his easy-tempered predecessor laxities had grown up in the Papal court and household which called for a firm hand and a watchful eye. But reformers are seldom popular : reform, indeed, means too often the replacing of wrong by wrong. His friends—the '*Perugians*,' as they were called—did not bear their fortune gracefully; nor were all his kinsmen worthy of the confidence which he placed in them. His health was never robust, and he was close on seventy at his accession. His

pontificate, it was anticipated, would be a short one ; and public opinion already pointed to his successor, Franchi, on whom, but for his comparative youth, the choice of the Conclave of 1878 would probably have fallen. Within a few months this cardinal died, under circumstances sufficiently notorious at the time ; while the already aged Pope lived to see the years of Peter and a new century. Length of days is held by a natural instinct to constitute a title to respect. Leo XIII possessed this and other more undoubted claims to reverence : but a man verging on his hundredth year, who has filled the highest office in Christendom for a quarter of a century, has had his career.

*Vixi, et quem dederat cursum fortuna, peregi ;
Et nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago.*

No man is necessary to a cause. Others take up the thread of his purpose where he dropped it : like torchbearers in a race, we pass on to others the living flame which we have received from those who have gone before.

Leo XIII started with one great advantage : he succeeded Pius IX. Under this Pope the reputation of the Papacy had sunk to the lowest ebb. During his pontificate (1846 to 1878) the reaction against the great political movement which, originating in France in the previous century, had abolished privilege, remade the map of Europe, asserted the rights of man, the freedom of the individual, and the principle of nationality, reached its height. To expect that a movement affecting men so deeply and on so large a scale shall be always and in all things under the control of reason is to expect too much of human nature. The Revolution had been accompanied by excesses, by follies, by crimes ; and now the penalty had to be paid. Excess is often less mischievous in itself than in the reaction which it occasions. It was so here. Violence on the one side was met by violence on the other : liberty was cried down because licence had been introduced under the pretext of liberty ; knowledge, reform, progress were anathematised because fanaticism had run riot in their name. Truths, if truths they were, were stated in the most para-

doxical form ; principles stretched to the verge of snapping : a blatant and mendacious press threw dirt at the most honoured names in Christendom ; moderation, learning, modesty, were marks for the illiterate pen and the envenomed tongue. It was a carnival of religious ruffianism. 'An insolent and aggressive faction,' as Newman indignantly styled it, upheld by Rome, lorded it in the sanctuary : Peter was to be blamed, and no Paul withstood him to the face. Hence misunderstanding, mistrust, irritation, on every side. The Syllabus, it seemed, had broken with the present, with actual life ; the Vatican Definition with the past, with history : the Church had become *lucifuga*, light-hating—a thing unrelated to its environment, an element of discord in nations, in public as well as in private life. The civil power could not look on unmoved at this war of spirits : a spiritual translates itself too easily into a material conflict ; the public peace was threatened, the public order disturbed. Not a government but was suspicious and hostile : the war between Church and State was open in Italy and Germany, tacit in France. In England the most prominent of then living statesmen denounced the Vatican Decrees in their bearing on civil allegiance : everywhere consciences were troubled, sympathies divided, minds perplexed and ill at ease. The strain was too great to last : the pressure of circumstances, his own temper, and the traditional policy of the Holy See, from which his predecessor had departed, combined to mark out the work of the new Pope as one of conciliation. He carried it out with singular tact, with singular patience, and with singular success. Leo XIII was a born diplomatist, unwearied, astute, resourceful ; a Roman of the Romans ; a master of the arts that move and govern men. He could bide his time : he knew when to speak, and when to keep silence ; when to act, and when to refrain from action ; what to see, and what not to see. He took in the political situation at a glance. With one notable exception, he recognised existing governments as accomplished facts. Be their origin what it might, they were there, and had to be reckoned with : he saw in them chessmen on the

board on which he had to play. In France he urged the unwilling Right to rally to the Republic ; in Germany, to the central Prussian monarchy. He broke away once and for all—and it was the greatest and most memorable act of his pontificate—from the belittling and compromising ties that had been allowed by his predecessors to bind the Church hand and foot to the phantom of Legitimism, flesh and blood to corruption, the living to the dead. He perceived the reality of political changes, and was not afraid to act on his opinion. We may criticise the manner of his action, and question its motives : right things may be done in a wrong way. The unhappy Roman question poisons the atmosphere, and throws suspicion, often, perhaps, unreasonable suspicion, over every measure and utterance of the Holy See. In any case the claim to intervene with authority in politics, national or international, is an anachronism : the wisest men in the Church questioned the assumption underlying the Papal policy on grounds at once of precedent and of right. Extremists denounced it as opportunism. Had this been all that could be brought against it, it would scarcely have been necessary to answer the charge. There is opportunism and opportunism. There is an opportunism which trims, and hedges, and shouts with the biggest crowd ; and there is an opportunism which is large, clear-sighted, and statesmanlike, which discerns the signs of the times, and has an instinct for circumstances—the How, the When, and the Where. How much the Church has influenced the world ! we hear it said. Yes ; and how much the world the Church ! They act and react on one another ; it is as if there was a magnetic current between the two. And if to recognise this be opportunism, a Pope need be at no pains to disclaim it : history will object to Leo XIII not that he was an opportunist, but that his opportunism pursued secular ends, and that the means by which he sought to attain these were unjustifiable. On certain sides it was not unsuccessful. Politically, if his immediate purpose miscarried, he leaves the Papacy stronger than he found it, and bequeaths to his successor a situation full of possibilities for good. We may regret

that intellectual and moral advance has not kept pace with political : but it is only the ignorant who will minimise the results that have been attained, or disparage them as secular ; they affect the religious interests of millions of Catholics throughout the world. He who is charged with the solicitude for all the Churches must be no visionary, no cloistered ascetic, but a man of action, quick to conceive and strong to execute—a man and a leader of men. And, from another point of view, such distinctions as that between the secular, so called, and the religious break down when we press them ; they are valid only on the surface, and exist rather for thought than in things. For life is a whole. Whatever introduces an element of discord into it is mischievous in effect and fallacious in theory—all things being, in the last resort, one and of One.

Estimate it, personally, as he will, the statesman must reckon with Catholicism. Things are what they are : it is a fact and a force which can neither be gainsaid nor ignored. To those whose standpoint is speculative rather than practical it may appear that the Church enjoys a consideration out of proportion to her deserts ; that politicians, themselves indifferent or hostile to ecclesiasticism, play into the hands of the Curia, and show an unsympathetic front to their natural allies, the party of reform. The explanation is simple. Personal sympathies are out of place in politics : the reform of Catholicism, supposing such a reform to be desirable or possible, lies outside the politician's sphere. He can deal with a corporate body like the Catholic Church only through her representatives : who or what those may be is not, perhaps, a matter of indifference to him, but one in which he cannot interfere. It is not the fact, then, that even under Pius IX Catholicism was a negligible quantity. It represented many powerful interests, it stood for an aggregate of property, of influence, and of numbers, which no government could afford to disregard. But as a factor in the mind of Europe it had ceased to exist. To the average lay understanding the dogmatic pronouncements of 1854, 1864, and 1870, repellent as they were, were less repellent than unintelligible.

The *non possumus* of the Vatican left an impression of senile maundering ; the Holy See had fallen into contempt. The caricaturists of the time represented Pius IX as a querulous and scolding old woman. No one—and the fact is significant—ever represented Leo XIII in this way. It was felt from the first that he was a man, and a strong man. One might differ, disapprove, oppose ; one could not despise. His predecessor had been a man of sentiment—opinionated but impulsive ; an instrument in the hands of his ministers ; in religion an enthusiast, a waiter on signs and omens, living in daily expectation of a miracle that never came. Leo XIII was of another type. His religion, which was sincere, was dogmatic, not emotional. He was a cool and calculating tactician : he had little sympathy either with the effusiveness of Pius IX or the hand-to-mouth policy of Antonelli, whose want of principle, public and private, offended his sense of decorum : he would be no man's tool. He was his own Secretary of State ; he overlooked the work of the great Roman Congregations in person : he would not part with or delegate a fraction of his authority ; his was a one-man rule. He withdrew no pronouncement, he disavowed no action, of the previous pontificate ; but a new note of virility in action and speech was unmistakable : his ends were those of his predecessor, but he sought them by other means. He dreamed of a Rome the arbitrator of the world, of the sword of kings drawn or sheathed at the bidding of the Pontiff, of nations awed and unquestioning receiving the lively oracles from his inspired lips : no Innocent III, no Boniface VIII, was more Papal, more Roman, than he. A lofty, and not an ungenerous, dream—had not experience shown it unrealisable. Such power is too great for human hands : its notes, spirit and flesh, are self-destructive : Christ's kingdom is 'not of this world.'

Leo XIII was aware, though he was far from realising the full bearings of the fact, that the balance of power in the community was shifting from the few to the many ; and a social programme had attractions for him. Before his elevation to the Papacy he had interested himself in economic science ; and, while there is no reason to question the sincerity of his

sympathy with the masses, it is certain that he saw in them a reserve force on which the Church might draw. The domestic policy of the Vatican, too, pointed in this direction. The Italian monarchy had shown itself weak in finance; its administration, if not corrupt, was certainly not free from suspicion of corruption: a taxation, excessive in itself, was unequally levied, the greater part of the burden falling on the poorest; the standard of living, and generally of material well-being, was lower than under the old regime. It would be unjust to ascribe this change entirely to mal-administration: it was due in part to economic causes which operate independently of political conditions, and would have produced results under the Pontiff or the Bourbons similar to those that came about under the House of Savoy. But Italy's weakness was Rome's opportunity; in exposing the evils of modern industrial society—competition, a high rate of interest, the contract system, the concentration of small industries—the Pope could point to the fact that in former days these particular abuses were comparatively unknown (to add that other and more grievous wrongs flourished unchecked would have been beside his purpose), suggesting that they were due to the rejection of the mediæval theocracy and his own civil sovereignty, and that, were these restored, they would disappear. Such was the drift of the Encyclicals 'Inscrutabile,' 1878; 'Immortale Dei,' 1885; 'Rerum Novarum,' 1891; and 'Graves de communi,' 1901. In all this there was nothing inconsistent with Catholic tradition: it was the tone that was new. Theology of the strictest type insists on the duties of the rich and the rights of the poor in a manner somewhat startling to modern economists, who, when they touch on the moral bearings of their science, are apt to reverse this order, enlarging on the duties of the poor and the rights of the rich. The 'Rerum Novarum' asserts emphatically the natural limits of contract, and the doctrine of the living wage. 'In all agreements between employer and employed there is a condition, expressed or tacit, of proper rest for soul and body'; and, 'a dictate of natural justice more ancient and more imperative than any agreement between individuals underlies

the labour contract—namely, that the wage shall be sufficient to support the labourer.’ Resignation, however, rather than effort, was counselled: the teaching of the Encyclical was a blend. The advocacy of the claims of labour was designed to conciliate the employed; the invective against Socialism to reassure employers: while the practical conclusion suggested an alternative to an existing order from the disappearance of which the Church stood to gain. It was ingenious, but it was just too ingenious. ‘*Ars est celare artem*’: such a policy overreaches itself. And the limitation of standpoint was obvious. The difference between the mediæval and the modern state is fundamental. The problems of to-day are not to be met by falling back upon yesterday: the world goes on, not back. Neither popes nor kings can do much—it would be a mistake to suppose that they can do nothing—to settle social and economic questions. These must be lived through. No one can solve them—out of hand, that is—but, given time and a certain practical instinct, they solve themselves. In Italy the Christian Socialism, from which so much had been hoped, proved a two-edged sword. It has done and is doing good work, especially in Lombardy and Piedmont: but the Pope had evoked forces which he could neither lay nor control. Its representatives used such parts of his teaching as suited their purpose, and sat loose to the rest. Their Socialism was, in some instances, but thinly disguised by the qualifying adjective: they made common cause with the extreme Left; they were credited, rightly or wrongly, with complicity in the Milan riots in 1898; they were indifferent or hostile to what was regarded at Rome as the *raison d’être* of the movement and the test of religion, the Temporal Power. In 1902, an attempt was made to effect a fusion between them and the more conservative if less energetic ‘*Opera dei Congressi*.’ The action of the Vatican was received with nominal submission: in fact the line of division between the two sections remains as marked as before.

The foreign policy of the late pontificate had at least the merit of persistence: it may be summed up in a sentence—

the French alliance at all costs. This policy involved the alienation of the hereditary friends of the Church, the Legitimists : it has been persevered in, in the face of apparent failure and repeated rebuffs. In Rome, the centre of the Latin world, the Latin tradition goes for much. The Latin blood, the Latin tongue, and the Latin religion are a threefold cord not quickly broken : the Northern races, materially to be reckoned with, are to the Roman what the ' Foreign Devils ' are to the Chinese. The results of this assumption are sufficiently grotesque. When a redistribution of the Indian dioceses was made in 1886 it was the shadowy and obsolete claims of Portugal, a Power of the fourth class, not the needs of the population or the dispositions of the British Government, that were taken into consideration : the issue of the Spanish-American War of 1898 excited in clerical circles as much amazement as regret. That there is a want of actuality in their standpoint does not occur to those who occupy it : they live in a world of abstractions, where men are windmills and windmills men. The pride of caste of the Roman official is as intense as it is narrow. He does not regard a Frenchman as his equal : but France, after all, is a connexion—richer and more powerful than the elder branch of the family ; at whose service it is but natural that her resources, her purse, and, in case of need, her sword, should be placed. This is his fixed conviction, whatever government holds the reins of power in Paris ; and it must be admitted that history gives it a show of reason. The Monarchy was the eldest daughter of the Church ; the First Empire rebuilt the sanctuary ; the Republic in 1849 crushed the Roman Republic, and restored Pius IX to a sinister and insecure sovereignty which the bayonets of Napoleon III propped up for twenty years. The Third Republic, though it remained on formal terms with the Vatican, was at heart hostile ; there was a tacit but sensible antagonism between the two. This was not unnatural. Under the last four Popes not Republicanism only, but Liberalism of every sort and kind had been suspect : the modern state had been anathematised root and branch by the Syllabus ; the rejection of hereditary and absolute

monarchy was rejection of God, by whom kings reign. To be a Catholic, then, was to be an anti-Republican ; and the more pronounced the religious the more aggressive the political element became. Pius IX had little faith and less skill in diplomacy. He blessed and cursed, but misfortune followed his blessing and those whom he cursed prospered ; Italians credited him with the evil eye. Leo XIII, who had an eye for facts, saw that at this rate France was being lost to Rome. The country, aware that the Republic divided Frenchmen less than any other form of government, turned a deaf ear to pretenders : to identify the Church with an adventurer like Boulanger, or with the dowagers of the Faubourg St. Germain, was to throw up the game. Had the Pope disavowed, and that emphatically, the connexion which the Legitimists were never tired of asserting between monarchy and religion, all good men would have applauded. But he did more than this. The acceptance of the Republic was enjoined as a religious duty. 'We have said to the Catholics of France, "Accept the Republic ; respect and be subject to it as representing the power that comes from God."' Was this advice ?—in which case there can scarcely be two opinions as to its wisdom—or command ? in which case there can scarcely be two opinions as to its lawfulness. In the case of a Pope it is difficult to draw the distinction : his least word is weighty, and stands—or is meant to stand—for law. That it was so in this case shows the inherent weakness of French Monarchism. Under similar circumstances Nationalism in Ireland showed more backbone ; there was no mistaking the reception given to the Papal intervention in the case of the Parnell Tribute and the famous Rescript of 1888 : it said, as plainly as words could say it, 'No politics from Rome.' The difference was that the one movement had and the other had not a genuine public opinion behind it. Legitimism collapsed like a pricked bubble ; but Legitimists have not forgotten that they were wounded in the house of their friends.

How far can this policy be pronounced a success ? In political as in social science Leo XIII has shown that there are unsuspected possibilities in Catholicism ; that

they are mistaken who judge it at any given time by what they hear and see ; and in neither case did he go beyond the limits of traditional theology. The alliance between altar and throne was brought about by circumstances—the relation of the Holy See to the house of Austria and the Bourbon monarchies, and knit closer by the reaction from the Revolution : it was a matter of politics not of religion, though politicians, secular and ecclesiastical, did their best to identify the two. The Italian republics of the Middle Ages had flourished in the palmiest days of the Papacy ; Leo XIII could say truly, ‘ Of the various forms of government the Church rejects none that are fitted to procure the welfare of the subject ’ ;¹ it was time that men should be reminded of this forgotten fact. It could have been wished that the political motive of the reminder had been less evident. The Pope did nothing without a motive ; it was *do ut des*. And though a more remote—perhaps a larger—good was attained, his immediate anticipations were disappointed. He lost the confidence of his old allies without securing that of his opponents ; the former complained that they had been betrayed, the latter received his advances with suspicion : the voice was Jacob’s, but the disguise was imperfect ; the hands were unmistakably Esau’s hands. It was here as it had been with his social policy : his knowledge of facts was at fault. The gulf between the Republic and the Church was wider than he imagined. He had no objection to a republic as such ; but the republic which he had in view was a theocratic—that is, a clerical—republic ; he did not see that this is the one thing which no modern state, monarchy or republic, can be. With a difference of tone, the teaching of the ‘ Immortale Dei ’ was substantially that of the ‘ Unam Sanctam ’ : the civil power is to subserve the spiritual, which is persecuted where it is not supreme. The identification of religion with the Church is a fallacy based on an abstraction ; but it is a fallacy at once so plausible and so profitable that it dies hard. Modern society, however, is based on its rejection ; to have detected and passed once for all beyond

¹ *Libertas Præstantissimum*, 1888.

it is the note that differentiates the modern from the mediæval state. It would be difficult to name any onward step in history that has been fraught with so much blessing to mankind. Liberalism, it has been said, is not always identified with the Liberal party. Religion is not always identified with the Churches ; rather as these prosper that declines. A hardy plant, it flourishes in an austere atmosphere : in the insolence of wealth, in the pride of place and authority, it droops and dies. In our time, fortunately, it is not likely to be exposed to this environment. The conscience of Europe would not now endure a papal monarchy exercised directly or indirectly ; the standard of the clerical is lower than that of the lay state. Theocracy, as a principle of government, has been tried and found wanting ; lofty as are its pretensions, the polity which is its outcome is, experience shows, a negation of God. What is called in a large sense the Revolution—the movement which, starting with Voltaire and the Encyclopædists, and passing through the stages of 1789, 1848, and 1870, swept the world into its orbit, and is advancing to a yet distant goal—was a revolt against this conception of society. No one will maintain that it was dictated by directly religious motives ; few will deny that it has been at times irreligious, anti-religious even, in intention and act. But there is a purpose in human affairs independent of, and often working counter to, human agency ; that this movement has contributed to the spiritualising of religion, its deepening and broadening, its emancipation from the conventional and the abstract, is beyond doubt. Virtue in individuals has little to do with theological belief or ecclesiastical position ; no religious opinions either guarantee or are incompatible with it. And that the Church has no monopoly of goodness is fatal to her claim to a monopoly of religion : the test, ‘ By their fruits you shall know them,’ is decisive—it includes many who are without ; it excludes many who are within the fold. The distinction between natural and supernatural virtue breaks down when pressed. The most that can be said—and it must be said with reserves—is that the personal and self-regarding virtues

flourish best in the Churches, the social in the open—in a freer light and air. To represent the opposition between the Church and the world as one between good and evil is to misrepresent it ; the opposition, such as it is, is between two types or conceptions of goodness, each of which has its place in the formation of character. Each is liable to degeneration ;—we read of one saint whose custody of the eyes was such that he would not look his mother in the face, and of another who scrupulously replaced the vermin that fell from his clothes and person ; and each can be simulated ;—under the cloak of piety men may pursue private and secular ends. This is the explanation of the recent legislation in France against the religious Orders. Attempts have been made to excite English sympathy with the dispersed associations. Such legislation, no doubt, presses hardly on many excellent persons. One could wish that a certain discrimination could have been exercised ; that historical houses, such as the Grande Chartreuse, had been excepted, and that the purely philanthropic congregations had been left—it must be added, in view of the scandals at Tours and Nancy, under strict State supervision—to pursue their beneficent work. No government, however, could risk a repetition of the agitation which culminated in the *Affaire Dreyfus*—an agitation which, if not due to, was fomented by the Orders, and but for them would never have reached its actual proportions. Since then legislation has been inevitable. Such congregations as the Jesuits and the Assumptionists had made themselves impossible. And law is necessarily general ; in their fall they dragged down others, who but for them would have been unmolested. The Pope protested : but his protest lacked genuineness. He saw that protest was unavailing ; that the noisy and mischievous fanatics, whom he had unsuccessfully endeavoured to restrain, had themselves only to blame for what had taken place. The most significant feature in the situation is the indifference of the country. The demonstrators are few and unrepresentative ; the electorate, without enthusiasm indeed, but as a matter of necessity and conviction, approves. The fact is that since 1870 the growth

of the congregations has been abnormal, and corresponds to no national need or sentiment ; the consequence being that they have not taken root. Many, while in form religious, are in reality commercial undertakings, industrial or educational. Their relations with the secular clergy are strained, priests of the better sort regarding them as spiritual charlatans ; those of the worse as rivals in trade. Zola's ' Vérité ' is a photograph from the life : the friars, wise in their generation, exploiting the ignorance and credulity of the multitude ; the bishop and the parish priest disapproving at heart, but aware that circumstances are too strong for them, now venturing on an ineffective and ineffectual protest, now carried away by the tide. The melancholy thing is that Rome has been unable or unwilling to rebuke the evildoers. Policy went for much ; religion for little. She temporised ; her utterances were ambiguous and evasive ; the trumpet gave an uncertain sound. Had Leo XIII enforced a non-political attitude on the clergy, reformed abuses, checked superstitious cults, and at the time of the " red fool-fury " of anti-Semitism proclaimed the elementary principles of Christianity, whether men would hear or whether they would forbear, he would have left the Church morally and religiously stronger than he leaves it. Perhaps the power was wanting to him. Autocracy is a legal fiction : the autocrat, whether at Rome or at St. Petersburg, is an autocrat only in name. Whatever the cause, his French policy was no more than a palliative. It failed in its immediate object—the formation of a Catholic party independent of domestic politics—and it was bound to fail. The cause of the Church associates itself naturally with certain local and national interests. Separate it from them, and it evaporates ; the soul is disembodied, and becomes a ghost. Such as it was, the Pope broke up the fabric of French conservatism, replacing it with—the neo-Catholicism of M. Huysmans and M. Brunetière. It was not worth while to do so much to effect so little : it is not in economics only that the *laissez-faire* policy commends itself. The one thing that can be said for the Papal diplomacy is that it postponed the evil day. This is something.

To avoid the necessity of fighting when we are aware that we should fight at a disadvantage is good policy. Later on the position of the contending parties may be more equal, the issues clearer; or arbitration may settle the points in dispute.

The relations of the Holy See to Italy centre in the Roman question—if that can be called a question which no practical politician holds to be open to question: it bars the way to peace and understanding between the two. It would be unjust to hold Leo XIII personally answerable for the action of the Vatican at the time of the assassination of King Humbert—action simply shocking to right-minded men. His personal demeanour was unexceptionable; it was not the Pope, we may believe, but the evil power behind the Pope, that was responsible for the wrong done in his name. But though here as elsewhere he was inclined to negotiation, and on more than one occasion threw out indirect proposals which were displeasing to the reactionary members of the Curia, and which he subsequently withdrew, there is no reason to believe that his attitude differed in substance from that of Pius IX. This was that a civil sovereignty is essential to the Papacy as a safeguard and guarantee of its spiritual independence.¹ Well might a Vaticanist prelate denounce the appeal to history as treason: history on every page refutes the claim. It recalls spiritual weapons used in the interests of secular policy, wars stirred up, treaties broken, the strangest political combinations entered into to extend, strengthen, or preserve a kingdom which, unlike Christ's, was of this world. The bare suspicion of a political motive is fatal to the religious influence of the Papacy; whether, as in Ireland, it results in disobedience, or, as in France, in disaffection, it weakens the authority and damages the credit of the Holy See. The Pontiff is and must remain international. Were he an Italian, in the sense in which the Archbishop of Paris is a French, or the Archbishop of Westminster an English, bishop, the Papacy would be at an end. But of all conceivable means that could be devised to secure his

¹ Pius IX, *Rescriptentes*, 1870; Leo XIII, *Inscrutabile*, 1878.

international character the sovereignty of a petty state is the most calculated to defeat its purpose. This is to make him the shuttlecock of contending powers and parties, tossed from one to the other in insolent sport. The mediæval view was based on a truer insight. The Pope, if he is to be a sovereign at all, must be supreme among sovereigns, possessing by divine right the plenitude of power, temporal as well as spiritual, the king of kings. The incessant straining over the lost territorial sovereignty gave the late pontificate the air of a prolonged intrigue. Non-Catholic powers—Germany and Russia—were courted; French anti-clericals deferred to; Austria, the hereditary ally of the Church, thwarted at every turn—to weaken and isolate Italy; hostility abroad was fanned, sedition at home fostered, the suicidal *nè elleti nè elettori* policy persisted in—to bring the hated Piedmontese Government into disrepute. When Acciarito—happily without success—attempted the sovereign's life, regret was expressed in clerical circles at his failure. Can we wonder that patriotic Italians regard the Church as the enemy of their country? that, compelled to choose between Pope and fatherland, they choose—as we, were we in their place, should choose—fatherland, at whatever price, and come what may? The excesses that attended the capture of Perugia by the Papal troops in 1859 are not, and should not be, forgotten. A government, it may be urged, is in its right in suppressing sedition. What better evidence could be advanced of the incompatibility of the functions of government with those of a Christian bishop? It is a sorry sight, nor can any sophistry make it less sorry—the shepherd rending the sheep, an apostle of peace disseminating hatred, the Vicar of the Christ who disclaimed earthly kingship trampling a nation under his feet to mount a throne. And that a throne lost beyond hope of recovery. It is conceivable, barely conceivable, that economic causes might destroy Italian unity; and that in the consequent upheaval the Pope might regain a semblance—it could be but a semblance—of his vanished rule. But it is inconceivable that such a state of things could last for a generation. Nor would a far-sighted clerical desire its

permanence. Politically, even, the weakness of the Vatican is strength, and its strength would be weakness. A veteran Italian Liberal, Gaetano Negri, witnessed, he tells us, with mixed feelings the occupation of Rome in 1870; for the Rome of the Popes was an object-lesson: a living demonstration of the evils of clerical government. This removed, these might be forgotten, 'Hoc Ithacus velit': the seeming loss to the Papacy might prove ultimate gain. Whether from the standpoint of religion or politics, no greater misfortune could befall the Church than the recovery of the legacy of ancient hatred from which she has been unwillingly freed. 'Frustra petitur quod contra rationem salutis petitur.' Her prayers are answered by the withholding of the fatal gift for which she prays. Here, however, as elsewhere, the situation in which the Papacy finds itself has been inherited, not created, by the existing occupant; and it is an inheritance that must be liquidated with caution. Grievances such as those left by the events of September 1870, heal slowly. The Jacobite idea survived the fall of the Stuarts for close upon a century; Legitimism in France, Carlism in Spain, are not dead. Nor has the policy, foreign or domestic, of the Government been uniformly such as to inspire confidence. Hence a certain reaction, which Italian statesmen will do well to note. The remembrance of the old tyrannies, Papal, Austrian, and Bourbon, is dying out: to the existing generation Metternich and Radetzky, Bomba and Antonelli, are names. On the other hand, the impression produced by unsympathetic Piedmontese administration, and by such scandals as those connected with the Banca Romana—the instance, unfortunately, is not solitary—is fresh in men's minds. It is a singular fact, however, and one indicative of considerable confidence in the present order of things, that a large proportion of the capital of the Holy See is invested in Italian National Bonds. A *modus vivendi*, it is well known, exists under ordinary circumstances between the Vatican and the Quirinal, and suggestions have been made that the concession of what is called the Leonine City to the Pope might transform this *modus vivendi* into a settled peace.

The proposal leaves out of account a vital element in the question, the inhabitants of the Leonine City. If there is one thing more certain than another, it is that within twenty-four hours after the transfer the Pope would be compelled to call in the Italian troops to shoot down his new subjects. Neither Italy nor Europe could tolerate the scandal of a sovereignty thus maintained.

It is only indirectly that the Vatican comes into contact with Protestant governments. But Germany, England, and the United States, though Protestant, are not purely Protestant countries : the presence of a Catholic minority and its own political interests lead the Pope to cultivate friendly relations with these powers. The first care of Leo XIII was to come to an agreement with Bismarck on the Kulturkampf, which had created a situation as impossible at Berlin as at Rome. He intervened, with indifferent success, in Irish agrarian agitation ; in 1898 he proposed, though the Cabinet at Washington did not see its way to accepting his proposals, to mediate between the United States and Spain. Except where capital could be made out of their discontent, he had little sympathy with oppressed nationalities : he could not forget that it was the principle of nationality that had dispossessed him of Rome. If he supported particularism in Austria it was in order to weaken the Triple Alliance and so to injure Italy : he discouraged nationalism in Poland ; in Ireland he leaned in the beginning to Home Rule, in so far as he believed it to mean Rome Rule ; but pressure judiciously applied by the ministry of the day, and the hope of establishing diplomatic relations with the Court of St. James's, led him to revert to his general policy in such matters. The Rescript of 1888 was issued before the delegate, Mgr., afterwards Cardinal, Persico, had reported, and, it was believed, in opposition to his advice.

The vision of the conversion of England floats like a mirage before the Roman mind. Fed by the constant—though, from the point of view of their representative character, insignificant—flow of converts, and by the remembrance of certain episodes in our history—the abortive

religious policy of James II and the Oxford Movement of 1833—it spins out of its own empty imaginings cobwebs which a breath blows into air. Astute as the high officials of the Curia are on their own ground, remove them from it by a hairbreadth and their wisdom is folly: they live in a world of abstractions; contact with the actual is to them what the first pale light of dawn is to ghosts—it falls upon them and they disappear. They are ignorant of our language, our institutions, our character; they do not see that the episodes on which they rely are episodes only—backwaters lying out of the stream of our national life. They have no conception of the nature of constitutional government; Leo XIII believed, as did Pius IX before him, that the toleration of Catholic worship in this country was due to the personal good will of the Sovereign: a non-papal Christianity is incomprehensible to them; let a Protestant give evidence of the most elementary religious belief or feeling, and they are convinced that he is on the verge of Rome. Such misconceptions as these underlay Leo XIII's dealings with this country. He was anxious to conciliate the English court and people, because he believed that the submission of England to the Papacy was an event of the near future. Much was made in certain quarters of Dr. Newman's elevation to the cardinalate. It was significant, but it had not the significance that was attached to it: the Pope was not influenced by theological motives. When an American bishop congratulated him in emphatic terms on the appointment, he showed genuine surprise. He had been informed, he said, that it would be well received in England, and give satisfaction to certain distinguished persons whom he desired to please. He had caused inquiries to be made about Newman, and there was nothing against him. He believed that his books were highly thought of in his own country. Later in the pontificate, his ignorance of England led him into an indiscretion, which might have had serious consequences had it not been for the profound indifference with which the great majority of Englishmen regard the question involved. To High Churchmen the validity of Anglican Orders is the test by which Anglicanism stands or

falls. The fact that the Roman Church does not admit this validity introduces an element of personal bitterness into the controversy between the two communions : Anglicans cannot bring themselves to believe that Roman Catholics are in good faith in denying ; Roman Catholics that Anglicans are sincere in maintaining it. Both ignore what is the decisive feature of the situation—that the robust Protestantism of the nation minds none of these things, and, echoing the verdict of Heine's princess on Saracen and Jew, '*Sie stinken beide,*' passes unmoved and contemptuous on its way. The advance of mediævalism in the English Church was represented to the Pope, losing nothing, we may be sure, in the telling ; the question of reunion, which is to weak-kneed Anglicans what a candle is to a moth, was mooted by an enthusiastic French priest, who had seen England through High-Church spectacles, and, strange to say, taken seriously at Rome. The Pope was familiar with the idea of the reunion of Christendom, which meant to him the general submission of non-Roman Christians to the Papacy. With this end in view he had already approached the separated Eastern Churches, and now, he thought, his dream was to be realised—England, rich, powerful, far-reaching, the link between the Old World and the New, was looking with regret and desire to the centre of unity. He had persuaded himself, or allowed himself to be persuaded, that, if certain disciplinary concessions were made, the bulk of English Churchmen, headed by a section of the bishops and one at least of the two archbishops, were ready to fling themselves into the arms of Rome. The disputed question of Anglican Orders barred the way. In spite of the invariable practice of the Church and the decision of the Holy Office in the Gordon case, it was reopened, and a Commission appointed less to inquire and report than to report and inquire. If the desired end could be attained no theological considerations, said a high official of the Holy Office, would be allowed to stand in the way. To a foreign theologian familiar with England, who expressed a hope that the reordination of clerical converts from Anglicanism might be made conditional, an influential cardinal answered that this would not

satisfy the Holy Father, who wished to affirm the absolute validity of the English rite. On certain theological and historical objections to such a course being pointed out, his Eminence showed the extent of his knowledge of English opinion by the rejoinder that Cardinal Vaughan was expected shortly, and would no doubt take a larger view. Before the commission met, the wind had veered to the opposite quarter. The Pope had been persuaded, with difficulty, that he had been misinformed; that in dealing with the English Romanisers he was dealing with individuals, not with a Church. His indignation was excessive; he complained that he had been deceived. The fact was that both he and his informants had been over-sanguine, and had seen things rather as they wished them to be than as they were. The action of the Congregation with which the decision rested was a foregone conclusion; the previous inquiry a farce. The president of the commission, the late Cardinal Mazzella, would tolerate neither discussion nor argument; the instructions which he had received, and on which he acted, were to carry things with a high hand. It is to the credit of the experts consulted that four out of the eight leaned, with qualifications, to the weaker side. The evidence went to show that from the standpoint of Roman theology the Anglican diaconate was invalid, the priesthood doubtful, the episcopate valid. But the sword of the Apostle thrown into the scale outweighed argument; the Bull '*Apostolicæ Curæ*' (1896) was definitive: '*Motu proprio, certa scientia, pronuntiamus et declaramus ordinationes ritu angelicano actas irritas prorsus fuisse et esse, omninoque nullas.*' Always in extremes, the Pope and his advisers believed that the Bull would be followed by an influx of Anglican clergymen into the Roman communion; a fund was set on foot in England for their maintenance, and a college at Rome prepared for their accommodation. No miraculous draught, however, broke or even strained the net of the fisherman; a few curates, possibly worthy—certainly undistinguished—were the extent of the haul. A certain coolness followed between England—even between English Catholics—and Rome. Old grievances were revived; England, it was remembered, had

from the first befriended the cause of Italian unity. During the South African War the clerical press distinguished itself by the violence of its invective against this country. The English Catholics remonstrated, but their remonstrances were not well received. The Vatican is impatient of opposition ; obedience of the *perinde ac cadaver* type is what it desires. Nationalism, it insisted, bordered on schism if not on heresy ; England was but a part of Christendom, and the good of the whole must be preferred to that of the part. The Roman question is one which divides Catholic opinion in this country ; nor is English Ultramontanism to be relied on when demands are made on it which conflict with national interest or sentiment. Its representatives, lay and clerical, made no secret either of their resentment or of their obstinate patriotism. The Pope, seeing them intractable, made a virtue of necessity, and withdrew from a position which, miscalculating the forces at his disposal, he had hoped to be able to maintain.

The variety of Catholicism known as Americanism is only indirectly related to what is known as Liberal Catholicism in Europe. The American mind is not speculative. Civilisation is material : the general level of instruction is higher, but there is less scholarship, and there are fewer scholars, than in the Old World. Liberalism in America, therefore, is the result of the feeling not so much that traditional Catholicism has been undermined by critical and historical science, as that it is inconsistent with the requirements of the time and the country, and so will not work. The nation is proud of its rapid achievement, jealous of interference, tolerant of anything like distinction or superiority. It carries individualism to an excess : the market is the test of ideas as of commodities ; there is no conception of a standard fixed by experts, of the authoritative judgment of those who know. On this somewhat unruly infant, plunging and vociferous, Catholicism, the ancient nurse, would impose a restraint like that of the mysterious bag in which Continental babies are imprisoned, their limbs swathed in multitudinous bandages, movement of muscle and lung confined. The prodigy kicks at the proposal : neither threats nor

persuasion will induce him to submit to the bag. On one question after another—the organisation of labour, education, the internationalisation of the hierarchy—the Vatican, while met by professions of obedience, saw its plans frustrated and its prejudices flouted. The manner in which it retorted was characteristic. America has exercised a fascination over French reformers from Lafayette onwards: during the controversies which centred in and grew out of the Dreyfus case, certain French Liberals, better acquainted with European than with American Catholicism, ran Americanism for all, and more than all, its worth. Their Nationalist opponents were quick to retaliate; and they were the larger and the louder-voiced crowd. They included America, they had already included England, in their campaign of insult and slander; and Rome, ashamed in the face of a scandalised Europe to support them openly, intervened indirectly on their side. In a letter addressed to the American Cardinal Gibbons, and entitled, quaintly enough, ‘*Testem benevolentiae nostræ*’ (1899), the Pope pronounced against the notion of a distinctively American type of Catholicism, and warned the bishops against certain opinions and tendencies which they emphatically, and no doubt sincerely, disclaimed. An Irish-American prelate, Dr. Ireland, who had been credited, apparently on insufficient grounds, with liberal sympathies, and regarded as the protagonist of the movement, purged himself by an impassioned defence of the Temporal Power—an utterance particularly edifying as coming from a citizen of a democratic republic: and the matter, after being a nine days’ wonder, dropped, as such matters do. Nationalism had been encouraged; Liberalism, it was hoped, checked; American self-assertion reprimanded; the reputation of the Holy See—not raised. The protestations of the hierarchy were backed by no solid lay or even clerical opinion. The lines on which the life of the New World moves diverge more manifestly, if not more profoundly, from Catholicism than those on which that of the Old is developing itself. The possibility of a revolt of the provinces—and America is the most provincial of the provinces—is never lost sight of

at Rome. Policy, authority—authority, policy—are her remedies. Their success in the past has scarcely been such as to justify the confidence which, it seems, they continue to inspire.

So far we have considered the political side of the late pontificate. Catholicism, however, is a doctrine as well as a polity; as it develops into an organisation, so it implies a creed. The one and the other are, in the full sense of the word, unevangelical; not only are they absent from the Gospel, but its atmosphere contrasts with theirs. Taking human nature, however, as it is, they were inevitable; the conversion of the first age brought about the organised Christian Ecclesia, reflexion on Christ's teaching and Person produced the Christian creed. And they were necessary, humanly speaking, to the continued existence and propagation of the Gospel. Pure—that is, ideal—truth is intangible and incommunicable: religion must come before men in human likeness and speak to them with a human tongue. And, as man becomes increasingly conscious of himself and his surroundings, the likeness that represents and the tongue that appeals to him change: the Gospel, therefore, which is greater than its actual expression at any given time, takes new forms and adopts a new language. Its vitality is not exhausted in its manifestations; it overcomes the opposition between past and present, old and new. The advance of mankind towards self-realisation is ordinarily slow and almost insensible: we do not see that we are moving; we look back, and see that we have moved. Ordinarily, therefore, the change in religious conceptions takes place gradually and without friction: but there are times, corresponding to revolutionary epochs in the political world, when traditional belief gives way suddenly; when tension, doubt, and perplexity invade the spiritual sphere. Such a time was the century which covered the life of the late Pontiff. Its note was criticism. This has destroyed, not indeed Christianity—Catholic or Protestant—but the arguments by which Christianity—Catholic and Protestant—has been hitherto defended. It is as if, having worked out a problem, it

turned out that the process by which it had been worked out was faulty. The conclusion may be accurate—in this case there are motives of more than one order for believing it to be so—but it must be demonstrated by new methods and justified on other grounds. Discrimination is the first necessity : to identify the thesis with its alleged proof, the idea with its setting, is to involve both in a common fall. Leo XIII was not an obscurantist. Scholarly himself, he sympathised up to a certain point with scholars ; he wished to keep pace with the times. In the beginning of his pontificate, a German savant spoke to him of the gulf between Catholicism and the modern world with a freedom to which Popes are unaccustomed. ‘Why are you a Catholic ?’ asked the Pope at last. The professor shrugged his shoulders. ‘Because there is nothing else to be,’ he answered. The next day the Pope sent to assure him that, while he, Leo, lived, he had a friend at the Vatican. Nor, arbitrary as he was, was he personally intolerant. Almost his last act was to direct that an ex-canon of St. Peter’s, who had seceded from the Church, but eventually been reconciled, should be buried in the Chapter vault ; had he lived, he had intended, he said, to reinstate him in his preferment. It was a gracious and kindly thought. As the bodily sight fails the spiritual is quickened : the mists of passion and prejudice break before dying eyes. His performance, however, fell short of his promise. Renan compares a Liberal theologian to a bird whose wings have been clipped. He seems able to fly till he tries flying ; but when he tries them his pinions fail him, he falls in mid-flight. The words might have been written of the late Pontiff. He spoke well and wisely : you believed he saw. The next sentence showed that it was not so. He did not see ; or, if he did, his vision was intermittent : light and darkness alternately flashed before, and veiled, his sight. He gave with one hand, and took with the other. Catholics were not to be behind non-Catholics in philosophy and science ; but—they were to adhere to the methods and teaching of the Angelic Doctor : they were to devote themselves to the study of Scripture with all the assistance that could be afforded by archæology and

philology ; but—they were to avoid the *portenta errorum* of so-called criticism : the Church had nothing to fear from the full truth of history ; but—history ‘ covers an aggregate of dogmatic facts which claim the assent of faith and may not be called in question.’¹ While desirous of keeping an open mind, and capable under favourable circumstances of occasional excursions into modern life and knowledge, the atmosphere in which he lived was mediæval. ‘ E dotto, ma d’un’ ignoranza crassa,’ it was said of him. The most complex questions, he believed, could be settled by an Encyclical ; he never got below the surface of things. The nature of mind was a closed book to him : men were to think in masses, and to believe at the word of command. Nothing short of trepanning would have made him understand that this was impossible, or see the contradiction in conception which it involved. Under Pius IX the philosophical teaching in Catholic colleges had been unsystematic. The Idealism of Rosmini was powerful : Jesuits even, such as Palmieri and Tongiorgi, influenced by modern physics and psychology, sat loose to the abstract doctrines of Scholasticism—substance and accident, matter and form. The Vatican was not interested in such matters. Antonelli, while now and again throwing a new saint or dogma to the pietists, as one throws a bone to a dog to quiet him, schemed for the all-important Temporal Power, and let the rest go by. This want of system was intolerable to the methodical temper of the new Pope. In the ‘ *Æterni Patris* ’ (1879) he proposed as a panacea for the evils of the age—religious, scientific, social—the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, whom he appointed by Letters Apostolic, Patron of Catholic Schools. Aquinas, if not an original, was a singularly comprehensive thinker, and a man of encyclopædic knowledge. He was the Herbert Spencer of the thirteenth century ; the systematiser of the science, physical and metaphysical, mental, moral, and political, of his time. Nor did this science escape the impress of the acute and vigorous mind through which it passed. He was a ‘ *maestro di color che sanno* ’ ; he left his mark on the thought and

¹ Encyclical to the Bishops and Clergy of France, 1899.

language not only of his own but of later times. But to suppose that the last word of science was said in the thirteenth century, or that a thirteenth-century thinker, however eminent, has laid down the lines on which thought is to move permanently, is a paradox which to state is to refute: time is the measure not of sameness but of change. Nor is it the really great features of the Thomist philosophy, which attract its modern adherents—the universality of its compass, its intellectual hardihood, its confidence in the rationality of things: rather, it is its limitations—its assumptions, its attempt to deduce the universe from an unverified principle, its defective knowledge and appreciation of fact. The mediæval preference for the deductive method is natural and reasonable—on the supposition that the universe as a whole is known to us. But the more we are compelled to question this, the less confidence we feel in deduction; the more inevitably the slower but surer methods of observation, experience, and, generally, induction take its place. The ecclesiastical mind is still in the mediæval stage of assumed universal knowledge; the Ptolemaic system, banished from the material heavens, rules in the mental. The universe is mapped out geometrically and put in a ring fence. All is fixed, clear, definite; there is no place for undiscovered islands, unexplored continents, or unsailed seas. And when it is brought home to us that these things are to be found in Nature, if not in our maps, that we stand not at the centre but somewhere on the fringe of reality, the mystery of the unknown appals us; it is as if the solid earth had broken under our feet. ‘*Confirma fratres tuos.*’ Has Peter no message in this trial of spirits? Does no word of light and guidance come to us from the Central See? The Apostle, it seems, sleeps. What strikes the observer most forcibly is the absolute failure of official Catholicism to grasp the situation, to realise its gravity and the interests involved. It would be a mistake to suppose that the Vatican regards criticism from the point of view of our Northern orthodoxy as soul-destroying error. It does not think in this way. It thinks to order—which means that it does not think at all. ‘You English

make too much of truth,' said a Roman prelate. This is where the Northern mind parts company with the Southern. To the latter the question is one of obedience and party discipline or loyalty, not of conviction. To be a Catholic means at Rome to accept Catholicism as it stands, from the Trinity to the Temporal Power, and from the existence of God to that of Diana Vaughan, without discrimination or distinction—to question a part is to deny the whole. With Catholicism in this sense criticism is incompatible. To say that it is incompatible with Catholicism as such would be premature: this has changed in the past, and may change in the future. In our own time, however, there has been little sign of changing; the intransigence of Pius IX and the opportunism of Leo XIII are one in substance though they differ in form. Both are shattered against the spiritual nature of mind—men thinking as individuals not in aggregates, and in the last resort in accordance with evidence—and the inevitableness of reality—things being what they are, not what they are not, whether we will or no. The case of Galileo was not unique; in the Decree of the Holy Office (1897) affirming the authenticity of 1 John v. 7, the late pontificate supplied a parallel. If the passage in question is not authentic, not all the Pope's infallibility can make it so. And, if the evidence against its authenticity is conclusive, the authority that commits itself to this authenticity stands condemned.

In the immediate presence of death criticism is silent. We remember the virtues of the dead and forget their failings; the time of criticism is not yet. Hence the obituary notice is wanting at once in concreteness and in finality; it expresses the judgment rather of feeling than of fact. A juster estimate is now possible. History has yet to record its final verdict on Leo XIII. It will perhaps judge him more by the possibilities that he opened out than by the results that he achieved. The former were greater than the latter. His policy showed that the Church is not indissolubly wedded to the existing order of things or to its presuppositions; that she is larger and more manifold than at any given time she appears to be. That he did not see the

full bearings of this fact does not make his admission of it less significant ; it is the unconscious that plays the decisive part in human affairs. He was a diplomatist rather than a statesman ; hence the instability of his constructions and combinations. As a teacher he fell below the level of teachers whose pretensions were less exalted. He kept silence from good words when good words were called for ; he spoke, not as the Spirit gave him utterance but with human economy, at the dictates of policy, in ignorance ; poetry, art, literature, science—not one but struck a loftier note than he. There are Catholics who tell us that truth mounts from below upwards, the rulers of the Church being the last to accept it. The statement, if theologically questionable, as inverting the relations of teachers and taught, is true to history and psychology. Receptivity, then, is essential to the teacher ; his must be a light hand, a quick sympathy, a discerning eye. In the Papacy of to-day these qualities are conspicuous by their absence. It is dull of sight and hearing ; it is out of touch at once with the most enlightened and with the rank and file of its adherents ; it is unintelligent ; it rules, if no longer with an iron, with a heavy nerveless hand. Its light shines before men. We hear of the conversions, of the increase of plant, of the flow of money into the Papal coffers. But the picture has a reverse side. We do not hear of the leakage from above to free thought, from the middle class to indifference, from below to the abyss which lies so near the surface of our busy industrial life, standing to it as the fires of a volcano to the thin crust that separates them from the upper air. Least of all do we hear of the half-hearted allegiance, the nominal assent, the relaxation of moral effort that betoken a teacher compromised, a creed discredited, a confidence forfeited almost beyond recall. These features, indeed, are not peculiar to Catholicism, but they are accentuated in it ; its strength—organisation, discipline, centralisation—has become its weakness ; the more compact the body the greater the strain. It is not necessary to be of the fold of the Roman Church to wish her a prosperous issue from the dangers that threaten her. If, on the one side, she is a moribund mediæval

sect, on the other—and it is the greater and the more significant—she represents the main stream of Western Christianity. Directly or indirectly, we are her offspring. Nor, for all the weight of her years, has it ceased to be with her after the manner of women : no Christian alive to the extent and the possibilities of the Christian heritage can be indifferent to the treasures of the future which she bears in her ample womb. Mindful of these things, and conscious at once of the claims of ancestry, the ties of kindred, and an underlying community of belief and hope, the sincerest Protestant will assign her a place among the assets of humanity, which stands, therefore, to lose by her weakness and to gain by her strength. If the possibilities indicated by Leo XIII are developed by his successor, mankind will be the richer, and the *vasti luminis oræ* will receive increase.

V. PIUS X AND FRANCE

'Who would have thought,' said an acute observer early in the present Pontificate, 'that we should so soon have had occasion to regret Leo XIII?' The regret was entertained on public, not on private, grounds. As a man, Pius X is the more attractive figure; and, personally, his popularity is greater than that of his predecessor, whose long-expected death came to the Church as in many respects a relief. The almost unprecedented length of the Pontificate had created a sense of weariness: the cards, it was felt, had become monotonous; it was time for a new deal. That the Pope had been a politician was not objected to him: the Papacy is a political institution. What was objected to him was that his policy had been a failure. '*C'est peut-être la plus grande gloire de ce pontificat que d'avoir opposé à la Triplice une duplice franco-russe*' is the judgment of a recent critic. The glory is equivocal. So far, neither of the two Powers has taken much by the alliance; and the Pope's aim in working for it—the recovery of the temporal power—seemed more distant at his death than at his accession. The Republic proved intractable: its attitude towards Italy was friendly; its relations with the Church and the Holy See were strained. The Conclave of 1903 reproduced the existing political divisions of Europe; the interests represented in it were, on the one hand, those of the Franco-Russian, on the other, those of the Triple Alliance. The pro-French cardinals largely outnumbered those of the opposite party. The policy of Leo XIII was not meant for, and cannot be judged by, his lifetime only; few know how carefully prepared a scheme was shattered by the Austrian Veto, which fell like a bolt from the blue. The protagonist

retired with dignity, and from the chaos of conflicting groups and interests new and unforeseen combinations emerged. Why did not the cardinals defy a veto the lawfulness of which was doubtful, and which it would have been impossible to enforce? Or why, on the withdrawal of their original candidate, did not the majority elect one of their own number? The explanation is that the Sacred College was singularly wanting in men of ability and strength of character; never had its reputation stood so low. Arbitrary, and impatient of opposition, the late Pope had looked to acquiescence rather than intelligent co-operation in his counsellors, and bestowed the purple on instruments, not men. The natural consequence followed. The Conclave, composed with few exceptions of cyphers, was less a deliberative assembly than a voting machine, liable to break down under any sudden strain on its equilibrium, and the unexpectedness of the Veto put it out of gear. '*Effeminati dominabuntur eis.*' Had the cardinals been men of Rampolla's calibre, things would have turned out differently. But the powerful Secretary had overreached himself. The one thing upon which neither he nor anyone else had calculated took place, and the labour of years collapsed like a bubble. The rival parties split into sections. The French Monarchists, whose recognition of the Republic had never been more than nominal, clamoured for a change of policy; the foreign cardinals, less absorbed than their Roman colleagues in the pursuit of the shadowy Pontifical sovereignty, inclined to a religious Pope. In France, the Associations Law of 1901 had provoked the hostility of an active and unscrupulous party, whose influence at Rome, always considerable, had become dominant during the last years of Leo XIII; German diplomacy, fishing, as its custom is, in troubled waters, contrasted the humiliation of dependence on changing parliamentary majorities with the solid advantages of an understanding with the stable military monarchy beyond the Rhine. Better relations with Austria, the hereditary ally of the Papacy, were desirable; the *Los von Rom* movement had been strengthened by the resentment felt at the 'colossal ingratitude' of the Vatican during the late

Pontificate; and, though to stand well with Berlin and Vienna a certain change of front towards the Savoy Monarchy was necessary, the Italian cardinals outside the Curia were not disinclined to the change. Knowing better than the Curialists the temper of the country, they had endured rather than approved of the prolonged deadlock, and for the most part desired a *modus vivendi* with the existing regime. Causes such as these, and the necessity for immediate action which made protracted negotiations impossible, led to the passing over of more than one likely candidate. The *Papabili* left the Conclave cardinals; the Patriarch of Venice, of whom scarcely anyone, himself least of all, had thought, came out Pope.

Though not personally a politician, he had been a reserve candidate of the opposition, or anti-French, cardinals. He was the most colourless, politically, on their list; but, being in a minority, they could only hope to carry the election by a surprise vote, and had every reason to congratulate themselves. The new Pope was a stranger to Rome, his acquaintance with it scarcely extending beyond the formal visits *ad limina* obligatory on a bishop; to not a few of the electors he was unknown even by sight. He represented the Italian Episcopate rather than the Roman Curia. His relations, indeed, with the latter had been less than cordial, exception having been taken in high quarters to his participation on more than one occasion in the welcome given by the Venetians to the late and the present King. A peasant by birth, he possessed the qualities of his class: he was tenacious of purpose, his shrewdness was considerable, his sense sound. But his education had been that of a country priest; the acquired and artificially cultivated ignorance of the seminarist hampered his naturally good judgment; he stood outside the opinion and knowledge of his time. In this, indeed, he was not singular: the ignorance of the Roman official world must be experienced to be believed. But it is tempered by an experience—a traditional statecraft, a gift for dealing with men and affairs—in which he was wanting. A man of principle rather than of expedients, compromise was foreign to him; the opportunist temper of Rome was

not his. Hence the paradox, not to say the tragedy, of his Pontificate—that, disclaiming political aims, he is embroiled in a vortex of politics ; that, personally humble and unassuming, he bids fair to become the Hildebrand of modern Popes. It is David in Saul's armour. The sword of the mighty is two-edged, and recoils on the unwary ; he is cumbered by the unaccustomed gear. Conscious of his incapacity, his reluctance to undertake the exalted office to which the vote of the Conclave called him was sincere. But it was difficult, impossible almost, to refuse ; the heavier the burden, the more imperative the obligation to bear it if bidden ; unwillingly, but without grudging or reservation, he followed what he believed to be a Divine call.

The change of personal atmosphere was unmistakable. Leo XIII had been egotistic, harsh, a stickler for etiquette ; he had been admired, feared, respected, rather than beloved. Pius X is what the Italians call *simpatico* ; considerate, kindly, averse to ceremonial, willing to be seen and addressed by all. By heart as well as birth an Italian, his country is dear to him : from the first he spoke of the widowed Queen-Mother with sympathy, and of the Sovereign with respect. The *métier* of a Grand Lama was distasteful to him : he dispensed as far as possible with guards and chamberlains ; he invited his friends to his simple table ; he preached to the people—generations had passed since a Pope had dreamed of such a thing ; his easy ways and direct speech won the heart of Rome. The Vatican was less friendly. There his origin was resented. He was neither Roman nor a noble ; his Italian sympathies found no echo ; his homely ways scandalised those accustomed to the formalism of his predecessor's Court. It is said, perhaps not without truth, that his virtues are rather personal than official ; that he is a better bishop than Pope. The routine work of the Roman Congregations is so vast, and so technical, that it is a drawback for a Pope not to have had personal experience of it ; hence the impossibility, under existing circumstances, of a non-Italian, and the disadvantage of a non-Roman, Pontiff. The questions of policy which come before the Holy See are so intricate and so many-sided that

they demand the knowledge of a specialist and the judgment of a man of affairs. These Pius X does not possess. It was of the first importance, consequently, that his Secretary of State should be a man of experience, resourceful, patient, large of view. Under Leo XIII the office had been filled by the one man of first-rate ability in the Sacred College. But it was impossible that Cardinal Rampolla should be invited to direct the policy of the new reign. Identified, rightly or wrongly, with that of the old, and on Leo's death all but his successor, his retirement was inevitable; and it was in the interest both of the new order of things, and of his own future, that it should be complete. The name of more than one prominent cardinal was suggested; it was hoped by many that the choice might fall on Cardinal Serafino Vannutelli, a Roman, a diplomatist, a man of traditional type and official training. It was not to be. As Secretary to the Conclave, Mgr. Raphael Merry del Val had been brought into intimate contact with the new Pope, to whom he was recommended by his reputation for piety and his acquaintance with the principal European languages. He enjoyed the support of a powerful religious order: in a few weeks' time he was made Cardinal and Secretary of State. The appointment was in every way regrettable: from the first the Secretary has been the evil genius of Pius X. He was not a Roman, or even an Italian: a fashionable director among the foreign colony, neither by temperament nor training was he fitted for duties which brought him into contact with interests of another order than that of the sacristy, and into relation with men of a larger world than his own. A Spaniard by birth, he belonged to the strictest sect of Clerical and Legitimist orthodoxy; nor had his partly English education been such as either to enlarge his sympathies or widen his mind. A pupil of the Jesuits, he possessed at once the virtues and the vices of that famous order: he made no secret of his hostility to the House of Savoy and the New Italy, or of his hatred of Liberalism—that temper as difficult to define as it is easy to recognise—in every department of knowledge and in every quarter of the globe. Such was the successor of Rampolla. If the impenetrable ex-Minister

permits himself in his privacy to drop the mask which he has trained himself to assume till it has become second nature to him, he must smile at the irony of fate. Two other Spaniards—the Capuchin Cardinal Vives y Tuto, and the General of the Jesuits¹—make up the inner Cabinet : hence the notes of its policy—its high-handedness, its want of insight, its narrowness of outlook. The Roman spirit has its defects, moral and intellectual : encroaching, astute, unscrupulous, it minds earthly things. But, on its own ground at least, it is sagacious, practical—in a word, all that the diplomacy of the present Pontificate is not.

That with such advisers the Pope should have exhibited, personally if not officially, a conciliatory temper towards the Italian Government argues that where he has sufficient knowledge of the facts of a case his judgment is to be relied upon. But with regard to how few of the matters which come before him can he acquire this knowledge or form this judgment ! Infallibility is a legal fiction. Imposing as a theory, attempt to apply it, and it escapes you. A theologian justified his acceptance of the Definition of 1870 by the cynical argument, ‘C’est plutôt absurde que faux.’ Like other officials, the Pope is dependent on the information given him : according to its quality he is well or ill advised.

If ever a Pope had need of accurate information and prudent counsel, that Pope is Pius X. Never was the incompatibility between Catholicism, as a polity, and society more palpable ; never was the opposition between Catholic teaching, as commonly presented, and science more radical or more widely felt. This incompatibility and this opposition have reached their climax in France. And this for two reasons. Of all European peoples, the French are the most intelligent, the most open to ideas. Without the thoroughness of the German or the practical sense of the English mind, the French excels the former in quickness and the latter in versatility ; they represent an element in life and knowledge with which civilisation could ill dispense. The influence of France, indeed, requires to be balanced by other influences ; but to injure France is to lessen the intelligence

¹ The late Father Louis Martin.

and lower the vitality of mankind. Especially has this been so since the fall of the Empire gave free play to the genius of the nation, which is at once pacific and progressive. Neither its men nor its measures are beyond criticism ; but, with all the defects of both, the Third Republic has a stability which is wanting to more apparently stable Governments, because it has entered definitely upon the lines on which human progress is destined to advance. Hence the accentuation of the gulf between Catholicism and society, a clerical theocracy and the modern State. On one question after another—education, marriage, the congregations, &c.—their interests came into conflict. But over and above these several issues is the essential difference of purpose and conception : the former exists for a class, the latter for the community ; the former looks back, the latter, on. On the other hand, the ties that bind France to Latin Christianity are ancient and intimate : the designation ‘Most Christian’ attached to the sovereign, and ‘Eldest daughter of the Church’ to the nation, represent facts too vital to the past to be meaningless for the present. Catholicism appeals to the French, as distinctively as Protestantism to the German, spirit. And in each case the relation is reciprocal. ‘Ce que je constate est que, dans le monde entier, la France c’est le catholicisme,’ says M. Brunetière. The phrase, rhetorical as it is, contains a truth. Protestantism without Germany, Catholicism without France—here, as there, the soul would lack its embodiment.

Leo XIII, with the instinct of a statesman, saw this : Pius X is blind to it. Hence the essential opposition between the two Pontificates. In spite of difficulties with and rebuffs from successive Ministries, Leo XIII kept peace with France. He did his best, if that best was little, to restrain the internecine war between the factions that distract the French Church ; aware that the maintenance of the *status quo* was the condition of the welfare—perhaps of the existence—of religion, no price, he felt, was too high to secure it ; the abolition of the Concordat was an evil to be avoided at every sacrifice and at all costs. His policy was more successful than it appeared

to be, or than, perhaps, he knew. It failed in its immediate purpose. The Republic remained anti-Clerical ; its support in the domestic quarrel between the Vatican and the Quirinal was not obtained. But the rupture on which a less sagacious Pope might have rushed was averted, at least for the time. And to have gained time was much. Tomorrow new developments may present themselves and new possibilities arise. Both the virtues and the limitations of Pius X disinclined him from following his predecessor's lead. He inaugurated his reign by an emphatic repudiation of political aims and interests. 'Instaurare omnia in Christo' was to be the watchword : the Church was a religious, not a political, society ; he would be a religious, not a political, Pope. Alas for the futility of human intentions ! This attitude, however desirable in itself, is impossible. The history and genius of Rome—let us be just, the practical requirements of the Church at large—are against it : a Pope can no more dispense with politics than a bishop or parish priest with finance. The question is not, Shall he have a policy ?—this is inevitable—but, Shall his policy be just and enlightened ? Shall the means taken to realise it be adapted to their end ? The Allocution of November 3, 1903, disavowed, almost in terms, the Encyclical 'E supremi Apostolatus cathedra' ; Pius X has as distinct a policy as Leo XIII. With regard to Italy, a certain vacillation may be detected, the Encyclical and the Allocution, Bologna and Bergamo, striking a different note. The aim of the power, personal or impersonal, behind the Pope seems to be to make his acts of friendliness individual rather than official, and so to facilitate a change of attitude should circumstances demand it. But the broad lines are clear enough. Those who criticise the Pope's policy as uncertain overlook the obvious fact that it is, in substance, that of the group of cardinals which elected him—conciliatory to the Powers constituting the Triple Alliance ; hostile to France.

It would be doing Pius X an injustice to suppose that this is the result of conscious purpose on his part. He is in an exceptional degree the creature and victim of

circumstances. Everything is against him : his seminary training, his provincialism, his seclusion from the free air of the world. France—her people, her history, her literature—is strange to him : he sees ‘men as trees, walking’ ; he misconceives the situation with which he has to deal. He sees, because he is prepared to see it, an atheist ministry kept in power by the vote of a godless majority ; persecuted religious—guileless Jesuits and peace-loving Assumptionists ; secularism rampant in the schools ; unbelief, in the shape of criticism, invading the clergy : religion attacked from without and from within. And his singleness of purpose forbids him to take into account the motives of prudence that would have weighed with his predecessor : he is for rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, sword as well as trowel in hand.

But what are the facts ? The Law of 1901 closed the question of authorisation—‘la nécessité, pour les congrégations, d’une autorisation ; la permanence du contrôle de l’État est une doctrine aussi ancienne que les États organisés eux-mêmes ; jamais elle n’a été délaissée.’ This statement, which is that of M. Waldeck-Rousseau, is historically unquestionable ; nor will any French lawyer dispute the principle which underlies the fact. Successive administrations, however, had been lax in applying it : of the numerous congregations which, especially since 1870, had sprung up like mushrooms, not one in ten had complied with the requirements of the law. Opportunities have not been wanting on which, had they applied for authorisation, it would have been granted ; in 1880, had they acted on the advice of the Nuncio, and joined in a declaration of loyalty to the institutions of the country, they might have acquired legal standing. They refused ; and, under the circumstances, the refusal was equivalent to a declaration of war not only against the Republic but against the State. Warned in 1898 of the impending legislation, they hardened their hearts. They depended, they answered, on the Pope, not on the Government ; to apply to the latter to legalise their position would be to give to Cæsar the things that were God’s. The Law of 1901 gave the alternative of

authorisation or dissolution. Many chose the latter ; and the submission of those who at the eleventh hour retreated from a position which they found untenable was badly received. Irritated by their long resistance, and taught by experience to see in their policy and existence a menace to society, the attitude of the Chamber was hostile. The congregations, as such, were suspect. Of the unauthorised orders of men six only obtained authorisation ; the tardy demands of the majority were rejected without examination and *en bloc*. That the innocent suffered with the guilty is probable. 'Tu l'as voulu, Georges Dandin.' To associate oneself with evildoers is to share their ill-repute, and often their fall.

The Law of 1904 suppressed the teaching orders—with two exceptions—the maximum of respite being fixed at ten years. Their schools are to be closed as the local authorities can replace them ; and, where the communes have suitable premises at their disposal, there has been little delay in the substitution of public for private instruction. Denominational schools, however, are permitted, provided that their staff does not consist of persons actually members of religious orders ; and in many places the religious have secularised themselves, and so retained their schools. So frequently is this the case that the law, as it stands, has become a dead letter, the Government conniving at its evasion. In the case of mixed—i.e. partly teaching, partly charitable or contemplative—orders a recent decision of the tribunal of Troyes removes them, in so far as they are non-teaching, from its jurisdiction, nor is the Minister of Public Worship opposed to this liberal interpretation of the law.

It is not necessary to defend the action of the Government in detail. The principle of the Associations Laws of 1901 and 1904 is open to objection : 'Toute loi doit être impersonnelle, et une bonne loi n'a pas dû atteindre les congrégations comme telles, mais les abus commis par les congrégations.' It would have been well, as M. Waldeck-Rousseau urged, had they been administered with discrimination ; 'il ne fallait pas transformer une loi de contrôle en loi d'exclusion.' The action of the executive

has been occasionally harsh, and even provocative—in particular, the removal of the crucifixes from the law courts was a measure at once odious and ill advised. The omission of the Cardinal Secretary's letter of June 10 from the correspondence published in the *Journal officiel* was fatuous—‘on a fait acte de polémique, non de documentation,’ said the *Temps* justly : nothing but the certainty of detection can be urged in defence of those responsible against a charge of bad faith.

But a policy must be judged as a whole. And the insignificance of the opposition, both in the Chamber and the country, shows that the nation, which is not at heart irreligious, views it with approval. The explanation is that in France society is faced by a peril of which in this country we have, happily, no experience : a politico-religious party—a minority, indeed, but an influential and unscrupulous minority, whose aim is the destruction not merely of the existing form of government, but of the foundations on which the modern State is built. The Syllabus and the State are incompatibles. And not a word of the Syllabus has been, or will be, withdrawn. Under the restored Bourbons this party terrorised the nation : ‘I had rather see the most godless republic than a return to that state of things,’ said Vaillant in the ‘sixties, ‘though I believe that not a sparrow falls to the ground without God’s will.’ It rallied to the *Coup d’état* ; it conspired with Boulanger and Esterhazy : nine-tenths of what passes as anti-clericalism is hatred not of religion, but of the interference of a mischievous and meddlesome priesthood in public and private life. And for the remaining tenth, how much of the responsibility rests with those who have identified religion with all that is least respectable in opinion and least social in conduct ? ‘Ce sont des lamentables : ils ont défiguré l’Évangile de paix. Le confondera-t-on avec l’Église, ce parti misérable qui eût fait du monde un eunuque sans cerveau ni cœur ?’ The confusion is not unnatural : the conquest of Latin Christianity by what Cardinal Newman denounced as ‘an insolent and aggressive faction’ is complete. Bowing themselves in the house of Rimmon, its

opponents exist precariously and on sufferance. For the temper and methods of the dominant sect the English reader may be referred to the Abbé Houtin's 'Question biblique,' 'L'Américanisme,' and 'Un dernier Gallican: Henri Bernier': it is by turns truculent and intriguing, offensive and obsequious, a mixture of Torquemada and Tartuffe. The results achieved in France were summed up by Montalembert: 'De tous les mystères que présente en si grand nombre l'histoire de l'Église, je n'en connais pas qui égale ou dépasse cette transformation si prompte et si complète de la France catholique en une basse-cour de l'anticamera du Vatican.' If the community has not asserted itself sooner and more vigorously, the reason is that in France anti-Clericalism is as great a danger to the public peace as Clericalism; threatened by two Terrors, a Red and a Black, the State plays off one against the other, and so keeps both in hand.

This is the key to the religious situation. The relation of the Centre to the Extreme Left is that of English Liberalism of the Palmerstonian period to its Radical wing: the Socialist vote is necessary to the Government, but the concessions made to Socialism are more apparent than real. The secular clergy have been unmolested; the members of the dissolved congregations, abandoning their distinctive dress and style, have, as has been said, in many cases returned to their occupations. The outcry of the expelled religious resembles that of our Passive Resisters—there is an element of comic opera in the proceedings both of the victims and the agents of the law. Nor have the attempts of the former to turn the tables on their opponents been happy. That the Carthusians should have been willing to wound M. Combes is not surprising: monks are men. But that they should have been afraid to strike—that, when called upon to prove the charges with which they had allowed themselves to be identified, they should have taken refuge in silence—this, if it does not throw suspicion on their good faith, suggests at least that their wish to believe was stronger than were their grounds for believing: the inevitable inference is that they were silent because

they had nothing to say. Hatred, however, breeds hatred ; nothing but the watchfulness of the civil power restrains the rival factions ; the presence of the gendarme, like that of the Turkish guard in the Holy Sepulchre, is the condition and guarantee of order. The extremists on each side are few ; but the matter is inflammable : at any moment a spark might kindle a fire. The country has suffered too much from the excesses of contending fanaticisms to risk their repetition ; and recent events have shown that the danger is not one of the past. There are spirits in France to-day as murderous as Ravallac and as turbulent as the Guises. Hence the acquiescence of the nation in measures which, in the interests of public security, withdraw certain classes of citizens from the common law, placing them, as our own Mutiny Act does, under exceptional legislation. Various explanations of this acquiescence have been suggested : Masonic terrorism, Jewish conspiracy, Protestant and foreign intrigue. It is not necessary to go so far afield. The average French elector knows his own business. With Catholicism as a religion he has no great quarrel—‘ tous les anti-cléricaux et tous les non-pratiquants ne sont pas pour cela en rupture de christianisme ’—but Catholicism as a polity he will have none of. He prefers the Government of M. Combes, with all its shortcomings, to a Nationalist Administration inspired by the ‘ Libre Parole ’ and the ‘ Vérité française,’ and dictated to by M. Drumont and M. de Mun.

That in the present state of tension the question of the Concordat should have been raised is to be regretted. That those who are animated by hatred of religion should desire its repeal is natural ; the amazing thing is that the Vatican should be found playing into their hands. The Cardinal Secretary is said to be acquainted with five languages : that of diplomacy, it seems, is not one of their number. It was impossible for any self-respecting Government to overlook the incident of the Identical Note—which was not identical ; the proceedings against the Bishops of Laval and Dijon, whatever their inner history, have been conducted with a high-handedness calculated, if not designed, to provoke reprisals. Events have moved, and are

moving, quickly: it is impossible not to fear that the rupture of diplomatic relations between France and the Holy See is the prelude to the separation of Church and State. Moderate men of every shade of religious and political opinion look with dismay on the prospect: the episcopate, the ministry, the majority of the Chamber and the Senate, the sense of the country at large—all point the other way. But it would be unwise to trust to this average opinion, reasoned and practically unanimous as it is. A determined minority has been able before now to precipitate matters and force its will on a reluctant majority: there is a tide in human affairs which carries with it the folly of the multitude and the wisdom of the wise.

In 'Concordat ou Séparation,' to which M. Ribot, an ex-premier, contributes a weighty preface, the questions at issue are discussed from the standpoint of a *rallié*. The book is not free from bias. The 'Bloc' is not the ogre that the author conceives it: 'ceux qui nous ont engagés dans la politique actuelle contre les congrégations ne sont pas si pressés que vous paraissez le croire de supprimer tous les rapports entre l'Église et l'État,' M. Ribot reminds him: nor are the organisers of Nationalist agitation the victims of unprovoked aggression; a Government has the right of self-defence. The Free Church in a Free State formula belongs rather to pure than to applied politics: it presupposes social conditions other than those which actually prevail. The purely material conception of the State—'une association pour la police et pour la défense'¹—is inadequate and unworkable: the community develops a moral as well as a material organisation, and cannot with impunity abdicate either its rights over or its duties to its members. So France has found to her cost: under the pretext of conscience, sedition has been admitted, the social structure has been undermined. The Affaire Dreyfus brought the country to the verge of civil war, and made legislation inevitable. 'Sachez-le,' exclaimed P. Coubé, S.J., in a sermon circulated by the hundred thousand under the title of 'Le Glaive électoral'—'il n'y aura à présenter aux

¹ Faguet, *Le Libéralisme*, p. 106.

élections prochaines, d'un bout à l'autre du territoire, que deux candidats : Jésus-Christ et Barabbas. Et Barabbas sous différents noms : Barabbas l'anti-clérical, Barabbas le franc-maçon, Barabbas le révolutionnaire, Barabbas l'anarchiste, Barabbas le communard. Allez-vous voter pour Barabbas ?' The eyes of the electorate were opened :—

Convenons d'abord que si pour les sectaires le moment d'assouvir leurs rancunes a paru on ne peut mieux choisir, c'est qu'aussi la partie leur a, sur certains points, été laissée un peu trop belle ; c'est qu'il est trop certain que les prétextes invoqués par les persécuteurs ne sont pas tous également iniques et léonins. Certains ordres n'ont pas été aussi prudents qu'on avait pu le souhaiter ; certains moines ont ouvertement déclaré la guerre à la République, gouvernement légal du pays ; et la virulence de leurs attaques contre un gouvernement ennemi fut une arme à double tranchant. Le peuple français, jusqu'à ces derniers temps, n'aimait guère 'le curé qui fait de la politique' : or, les jacobins ont pu lui dire et lui répéter sur tous les tons qu'il y avait des moines qui ne faisaient que cela ! Ajouterai-je ceci : qu'il y a passé trop d'argent par les mains de certaines communautés ? Et la véritable religion n'est-elle pas la première à souffrir de certaines dévotions parasites et un peu fétichistes ? ¹

In the face of such admissions it is disingenuous to speak of the hostility of the State to the Church as 'unilatérale' : in temper and tactics there is little to choose between the two extreme parties. And, in view of the consistent countenance, tacit under Leo XIII, avowed under his predecessor and the reigning Pontiff, given to the Bashibazouks of the Vatican, it is misleading to describe 'certains amis trop fougueux de l'Église' as 'désavoués, sans doute, par elle.' They have, in fact, carried everything before them. 'L'Église des Gaules a passé à l'étranger : au Pape Roi a succédé le Pape Dieu.' ² The extent to which the *communicatio idiomatum* has been carried may be judged by M. Noblemaire's language with regard to the contingency of the denunciation of the Concordat by the Holy See :—

¹ *Concordat ou Séparation*, p. 109.

² *Le Parti noir*, pp. 47-9.

En ce qui concerne le Saint-Siège, la thèse des catholiques passivement soumis et respectueux est que . . . cela ne regarde que lui ! De fait il est bien certain qu'il y a quelque irrévérence à sauter là-dessus les desseins du Souverain-Pontife, et qu'il y aurait la plus risible outrecuidance à prétendre lui dicter sa conduite. . . . Toute opinion arrêtée risquerait d'être audacieuse et téméraire, et le mieux est assurément de s'en remettre à la sagesse inspirée du successeur de Saint Pierre.¹

Thus Moses might have spoken had the tribesmen of Sinai mooted the revocation of the Tables of the Testimony ; thus the courtiers of Herod acclaimed his oration—' It is the voice of a God, not of a man.' But to be more is to be less than human : pride carried to this pitch overreaches itself and presages fall. The dissolution of a social is more lingering than that of the individual organism ; but here as there, metabolism, the free action of the natural forces of assimilation and rejection, is essential ; the arrest of these processes is death.

The tide of opinion sets in favour of what are called Free Churches :—

La séparation de l'Église et de l'État s'imposera tôt ou tard [says M. Ribot] parce qu'elle est dans le courant des idées modernes ; parce que l'Église reconnaîtra elle-même que la liberté est une condition de sa dignité, et que tout privilège se tourne fatalement, de nos jours, en servitude. So, too, M. Faguet :—

La séparation absolue des Églises et de l'État, les Églises payées par leurs fidèles, administrées par leurs fidèles, gouvernées par ceux qui ont la confiance de leurs fidèles, c'est la seule solution libérale, c'est la seule solution rationnelle, c'est la seule solution pratique.

Such reasoning suffers from an excess of abstraction. Had we to do with a world of ideas its logic might convince us : religion is a fact of spiritual experience which each of us must make his own. No one can experience it for us, just as no one can think or feel for us : consciousness is incommunicable ; we must experience, think, and feel for

¹ *Concordat ou Séparation*, p. 184.

ourselves. 'God and the soul ; the soul and its God'—this, says Harnack, is the substance of Christianity. And here, in the last resort, Catholic and Protestant are at one : 'it is face to face, *solus cum solo*,' Cardinal Newman assures us, 'in all matters between man and his God.' So that the intrusion of a material element into this ideal scheme is incongruous, or even destructive : Christ's kingdom is 'not of this world.'

But the actual falls short of the ideal. The Gospel was given to men, not to pure spirits : the vessel freighted with it is embarked not on the 'sea of glass like unto crystal' of the Apocalypse, but on the turbid and tempestuous ocean of humanity. With the extension of Christianity the human or exterior side of the Divine fact came into prominence. It was inevitable that this should be so : and if, as history shows, the material took place too often at the expense of the spiritual development—if the House of God became, like her prototype the Temple, a den of thieves—this is reason, indeed, for the watchful and efficient control of the conscience of the community acting through the civil power ; but not for a confusion between the abstract and the concrete which would disregard at once actual social conditions and the laws of human nature. The Protestant Churches in France and the Nonconformist bodies in our own country have flourished under the voluntary system, and contributed out of proportion to their numbers to the increase and well-being of the commonwealth. But no inference can be drawn from these societies to a National Church. A separatist minority is composed, with few exceptions, of men of decided character and convictions : narrow as may have been their tenets and sectarian their temper, the history of the Nonconformist Churches is one of hardness endured for conscience' sake. And this experience develops qualities of a high order in other departments of life than that of religion : the indolent and indifferent fall away. Hence these Churches have little hold on the masses of the population : their appeal is to a middle class, energetic, prosperous, and relatively intelligent ; to the successful self-made man. The distinctive note of

men of this type is self-reliance, not to say self-sufficiency ; their independence is a vice bordering on a virtue, and a virtue on a vice. They are able and willing to provide themselves with the religious machinery which commends itself to them ; to support a preacher, to build a chapel, to organise a school. The case of a National Church is different. Nominal as may be their adhesion, it numbers among its members those of the community least capable of recognising and supplying their own needs, temporal or spiritual. Such persons are in the position of minors under the guardianship of the community, which, for their good and its own, charges itself with their training in citizenship, with their protection against those who would exploit them for selfish or interested purposes, and, above all, with their defence against themselves. If religious influences are useless or prejudicial to these ends, the case for the establishment of religion falls. But few will be found to maintain this ; to argue that were Christianity removed mankind would be happier or more virtuous. The police theory of religion, indeed, needs only to be named to be rejected. Rather it is as giving the readiest and most efficacious access to the ideal that we prize it : to those who would escape from

the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world

it offers emancipation, peace, the spaciousness of the infinite. No honest student of history will minimise the sins of the Churches. But, be they what they may, they are outweighed by the treasure of the Gospel which the Churches contain, and in virtue of which they subsist. Other roads to these larger horizons, it may be urged, are open to us—art, literature, philosophy. To the educated few, yes ; to the unlettered many, no. For these, at least, religion, with the symbols under which alone they can receive it, is vital : its disappearance would mean the encroachment of darkness upon the shores of light, of chaos on order, the weakening of the good and the strengthening of the evil that is in the world.

If the influences of religion are to be brought to bear upon the population as a whole, a religious organisation must be provided. This is too important a matter to be left to individual initiative : to make the requisite provision is at once the right and the duty of the community : and in France, as in our own country, it has been made. The Concordat of 1801, recognising that the 'Roman Catholic religion is that of the great majority of French citizens,' took measures for its re-establishment and free exercise. It was an act of the highest statesmanship. Bold, in view of the past, for the fires of the Revolution were smouldering ; prudent, having regard to the present, for it not only guaranteed religious peace, but gave economic security by confirming the tenure under which the Church lands were held by their new owners—it stands, with the Code, a monument to the constructive genius of the man who more than any other has left his stamp not on France only, but on the Europe of to-day.¹ Nor should the wisdom and moderation of the Holy See be overlooked. Pius VII, with whose name that of the virtuous and enlightened Consalvi must be associated, was equal to the occasion. He knew where to yield, and how to give way with dignity : he remembered that his Apostolic authority was a trust to be employed for the good not of the Church, but of religion ; not of the clergy, but of mankind. Instead of meeting accomplished facts with the *non possumus* of later Pontiffs, he recognised them as constituting the situation with which he had to deal. He acquiesced in the wholesale alienation of Church property brought about by the Revolution : by a stretch of jurisdiction without parallel in history he suppressed the 135 historical bishoprics, substituting for them sixty new sees. That owing to subsequent events the Concordat has facilitated the Romanising of the French Church is true. But neither this result nor the causes that led to it could have been foreseen. The Napoleonic regime was established to all appearance on lasting foundations. Had it remained, the influence of Rome on France would have been nominal and the development of Catholicism during the last century

¹ Cf. Brandes, *The Reaction in France*, pp. 38-55.

have proceeded on other lines than it did. Lust of conquest wrecked the Empire; no one Power could permanently absorb Europe. Its fall enabled Rome to concentrate into herself the powers inherent in the Church as a whole, and substitute a one-man rule for a constitutional monarchy. Ultramontaniam may wreck the Papacy, as Cæsarism wrecked the Empire, but for the time it is triumphant: Latin Christianity is the Pope.

In two notable respects successive Governments have allowed the Church to go beyond the terms of the Concordat. That agreement is silent on the subject of religious associations. At the time of its formulation they were at once illegal and non-existent; and that the First Consul, in whose eyes the Church was as purely a branch of the civil service as the police or the post office, contemplated their revival will not be maintained. Omission was prohibition: it stereotyped the existing order of things. The Republic has been generous. In 1900 there were 200,000 religious in France—in 1789 their number was but 60,000; nor till its hand was forced did the Government interfere to protect itself against the withdrawal of so many citizens from the duties of citizenship, the scarcely veiled hostility of the orders to the institutions of the country, or the accumulation of property—in 1900 upwards of 1,071 million francs—in their hands. ‘Jamais, sous aucun régime, les congrégations ne se sont multipliées sur le territoire français autant qu’au cours des trente dernières années au dix-neuvième siècle. Leur développement prodigieux et presque démesuré est un des faits dominants de l’histoire sociale d’hier.’ Here, however, excessive as was the increase, social and economic changes called for a large interpretation of the treaty: ecclesiastical organisation varies, within certain limits, according to the requirements of the times. With regard to the other point, the nomination of bishops, the necessity for departing from the terms of the Concordat is less apparent. The *Nobis nominavit* on which the Vatican now insists is foreign both to its letter and to its spirit. ‘Le premier Consul nommera aux archevêchés et évêchés . . . Sa Sainteté confèrera l’institution canonique.’

It is easy to imagine how a Napoleon would have met a refusal on the part of the Pope to institute his nominee. There is an increasing unwillingness, however, on the part of the State to enter upon a conflict with the spiritual power, or to take measures which may be interpreted, however unreasonably, as an infringement of the rights of conscience. This reluctance is natural. Neither credit nor success is to be gained by such a policy : ideas, mischievous and erroneous as they may be, must be met not by force, but by ideas. It is the absolutist governments that have been the slowest to recognise this. Louis XIV claimed the right to appoint vicars capitular ; in the Pamiers case sentence of death was passed on those canonically elected by the chapter ; Louis XV suppressed religious houses as arbitrarily as M. Combes. The restored Bourbons revived the policy of their house : on the definition of the Immaculate Conception, in 1854, the Ministers of Napoleon III gravely discussed the question whether the Dogmatic Bull of Pius IX erecting that opinion into an article of faith should be received in France ; the bishops were authorised to publish and the faithful to accept it by a majority of three to two. The Republic has been less exacting. The Definition of 1870 crossed the frontier without undergoing the formalities of the Douane or receiving the *Imprimatur* of the Minister ; episcopal appointments became matter of arrangement between Rome and the Government ; congregations, authorised and unauthorised, multiplied ; industries, wealth, influence, accumulated in their hands. The encroachment of the ecclesiastical on the civil power was tacit, gradual, unceasing. Suddenly, and when least expected, the awakening came. France found her progress barred, her liberties menaced, her life imperilled. Then, and not till then, she turned upon the disturbers of her peace.

Avide de progrès, la société prenait la résolution de briser ou de mettre hors d'état de lui nuire ceux qui entraient sa marche. L'autorité ecclésiastique compétente n'avait pas voulu, ou n'avait pas osé, surveiller, éclairer, diriger, réformer un grand nombre des congrégations : l'État les supprima. Educateurs fanatiques et rétrogrades,

moines journalistes et obscurantistes, religieuses vivant dans la routine et trop portées à bâtir de grands couvents et de belles chapelles ; innocents, coupables, ou suspects, tout fut balayé par une démocratie brutale et pressée.

There were those of their own order whose moderation would have restrained the excesses that at last exhausted the nation's patience ; whose learning commanded the respect, whose virtues the sympathy, of good men, irrespective of party or creed. Their motives were denounced, their counsels derided ; they were subjected to every humiliation which malice could dictate or fanaticism suggest. The case of the Abbé Loisy is fresh in memory. ' Au lieu de s'adapter au monde qui les voulait de leur temps, et à chercher à sauver ce qui restait de l'antique foi, les vaincus se montraient surtout préoccupés d'écraser ceux de leurs coréligionnaires qui gardaient leur confiance dans la vérité et dans la liberté.' ¹

Under the present Pontificate no change is to be expected : in theology, in economics, in politics, reactionary influences are dominant. Leo XIII was essentially an opportunist. It may be doubted whether his policy as a whole was more enlightened than that of his successor. But certainly it was less impossible. He did not see the inevitableness of the new order either in thought or in things : he imposed the philosophy of St. Thomas on the Catholic schools, under the strange belief that it contained the key to life and experience ; he hoped against hope for the restoration of the temporal power, scheming for it with a perseverance worthy of a better cause. But if he endeavoured to stem the advancing tide, his object was to direct, not to turn it : he believed it possible to reconcile knowledge with tradition, democracy with authority, society with the Church. If his conception of the content of these terms was inadequate, his belief in their ultimate identity was worthy of his office. And there was an elevation in his standpoint which gave his utterances dignity : he stood like a seer on a watch-tower surveying the ebb and flow of human affairs. He was conscious of something, he knew not what, in the air that betokened change and shifting : and though his personal sympathies were with

¹ *Un dernier Gallican : Henri Bernier*, p. 433.

the old order, he desired to facilitate the transition from it to the new. He did not always occupy this high level : as his energy failed with years 'the malaria that clings about the base of the Rock of Peter' mounted, and the atmosphere even at the summit lost something of its serenity. But he refused to condemn science, his last public act being the appointment of a special commission designed to remove Biblical questions from the jurisdiction of tribunals whose competence and methods were suspect ; he refused to stifle the Christian Democracy movement in Italy ; he refused to break with France. Definitely and deliberately the present Pope has reversed these decisions. Things are what they are, and their consequences will be what they will be : the policy of Leo XIII is dead.

A Concordat, to take M. Faguet's definition, is 'un traité entre deux gouvernements dont l'un a des sujets sur le territoire de l'autre ; un partage d'autorité entre le pape et le souverain, une transaction entre deux pouvoirs qui sont forcés de s'abandonner l'un à l'autre quelque chose, mais qui tous les deux voudraient avoir tout.' It is of the nature of a compromise. Could a hard-and-fast line be drawn between the spiritual and the temporal, there would be neither reason nor room for such an agreement. But hard-and-fast lines exist for thought only, not in things : in fact a debateable land lies between the two. The clergy, for example, are at once ministers of Christ and public functionaries ; marriage is a sacrament and a civil contract ; education, a duty of parents and a charge on the community. This territory is claimed in theory both by Church and State : in practice their rival claims are adjusted by a treaty in virtue of which each of the contracting parties, for the common good and in the interests of peace, cedes, or agrees not to press, certain of its claims. The debateable land becomes a buffer-State, influenced by each, though incorporated in neither, of its neighbours ; a mediate or neutral zone.

It is obvious that such an arrangement presupposes a desire on each side to look for points of agreement rather than difference, to smooth over controversies, to discover or create common ground. The Combes Ministry has a worse

reputation than it deserves in this respect. It is easier to take exception to the measures adopted with regard to the congregations than to deny the necessity of legislation against them: the Republic acted in self-defence. Nor must we apply English standards to France: the injustice of the Law of 1901 and the harshness with which it has occasionally been administered are more perceptible to us than to those immediately affected, who, were the situation reversed, would act with more rather than less vigour than their opponents. 'La France est un des pays les moins libres du monde et les moins libéraux de l'univers: tous les partis quand ils sont vainqueurs devenant immédiatement redoutables et détestables.' The defects of the actual régime are inherited, the absolutist traditions of the Monarchy having passed over bodily into the Republic:—

L'omnipotence royale est devenue l'omnipotence populaire, la souveraineté nationale; l'omniscience royale est devenue l'omniscience populaire et cette idée que le gouvernement choisi par le peuple doit penser, croire et dogmatiser pour tout le monde; l'omnipossession royale est devenue l'omnipossession populaire et cette idée que tout le territoire français appartient à tous les Français; et en un mot, la théorie du bon plaisir royal est devenue la théorie du bon plaisir populaire. Il est impossible d'être républicains d'une manière plus parfaitement monarchique.¹

The impression left by recent events is that the Republic has not been the aggressor. The protest of the Vatican against M. Loubet's visit to Rome would have been taken as a form had it not been for the insertion of an offensive clause, omitted in the copy addressed to France, into the Identical Note forwarded to the Catholic Powers. The proceedings against the Bishops of Dijon and Laval were ill-timed and ill-judged. Ill-timed, because their effect was, and could not but be, that of a spark in a powder magazine. Supposing that the charges brought against the bishops were true, there were prelates nearer Rome whose record was as dubious: it is difficult for those who know even a little of French parties to doubt that religion was but a

¹ Faguet, *Le Libéralisme*, pp. 307, 322, 327.

pretext—that politics, not piety, lay at the root of the affair. Ill-judged, because, while the Pope under existing canon law possesses undoubted disciplinary powers over the episcopate, the manner in which those powers shall be exercised is matter of circumstance. Who does not remember the contempt poured by Burke on the argument that the Mother Country had a right to tax the Colonies? She had. But the attempt to enforce it cost her North America. A wise man is slow to assert his rights, or what he believes to be such, to the full. He will ask himself in each case, not, Have I such a right? but, Is it proper or possible to use it? That Rome has never acknowledged the Organic Articles of 1802 is true. But they have the force of law in France: and it is one thing to refuse to admit them, another to act as if they were non-existent.

Nor is it necessary to bring the Organic Articles into the discussion. It is a fair inference from the Concordat (Articles IV–V) that a bishop named by the Government and instituted by the Pontiff cannot be removed from, or disturbed in the exercise of, his office without the concurrence of both powers. The summons to Rome addressed to the Bishops of Dijon and Laval was no mere matter of routine. Had it been so the famous Article XX—in the Organic Articles—would have remained, as it always has remained, a dead letter: to assert or insinuate that there has been any attempt on the part of the Government to hinder freedom of communication between the Bishops and the Pontiff is simply untrue. It was in view of a judicial inquiry by the Inquisition into certain misconduct alleged against them that Mgr. Le Nordez and Mgr. Geay were called upon, under threat of excommunication, to present themselves. The Government insisted, rightly, that they were civil officials as well as Church dignitaries, and that the Inquisition was a tribunal unknown to French law. But the question is not one of persons. That, yielding to ecclesiastical pressure, the bishops have resigned their sees is immaterial; to advertise their submission as a triumph of Papal diplomacy is an empty boast. No other course was open to them. They were, probably, not the men to with-

stand Peter ; nor is Peter to be withstood on his own ground. Think as we will of the claims of Rome, they are in possession both in fact and in canon law. With the best case in the world an individual bishop is powerless ; he could as little defy the Vatican as an excursion steamer could defy the Channel Fleet. Not a sacristan would stand by him. The position must be turned, if at all, by a series of flank movements ; the Papacy is not to be resisted but explained. In the present instance public interest attaches not to the merits of individuals, but to the principle involved. Episcopal misconduct is one of those mixed questions which Concordats exist to deal with : had common sense and good will been present the dispute could have been settled in half an hour between the Nuncio and the Minister of Public Worship. Unfortunately, on one side at least, those qualities were wanting. Nor is it possible to isolate the case. It is believed, rightly or wrongly, that these proceedings are the prelude to an attempt to 'purge' the episcopate ; and that certain prelates of unblemished reputation, whose only offences are their attitude of reserve towards the congregations, their refusal to support the campaign against the Republic, and—in a few cases—their sympathy with the movement towards a scientific theology, are already marked out for attack. The refusal of Rome to institute to the ten sees now vacant gives colour to this belief, which is entertained in quarters usually well informed, and has been encouraged by the clerical press. This process of 'purging' would be facilitated by the repeal of the Concordat : were this brought about, the bishops and higher clergy would be simply nominees of Rome. Thus the rights of the laity, surviving, however faintly, under the present system, as in our own 'congé d'élire,' would be extinguished ; thus the last vestige of popular election, without which the early Church refused to acknowledge a bishop as legitimately appointed, would disappear. The present method of selection is not ideal. 'Le gouvernement propose un fripon ; Rome un curé de campagne : on nomme un imbécile,' said a cynic ; and though, applied to a hierarchy of which Mgr. Mignot and Mgr. La Croix are members, the formula

is inadequate, it contains the proverbial grain of truth. Whether things would be better if, as in England, Rome had a free hand may be doubted. 'What sort of men are the Roman Catholic bishops?' an English convert of the last generation, a militant Ultramontane, was asked. 'Morally, highly respectable; intellectually, beneath contempt,' was the answer. The choice of authority falls instinctively on pliant nullities, opportunist under one Pope, frankly obscurantist under another. With twenty years of Pius X and his Spanish advisers the French hierarchy would consist of Richards, Turinaz, and Rumeaux. The interests of religion would suffer. Given a quick-witted people, already sitting loose to and contemptuous of Catholicism, it is easy to foresee the result.

It will not come with observation. A schism presupposes one of two things—either the *cujus regio ejus religio* relation between rulers and ruled, which made the Reformation possible; or a widespread interest in the points at issue, such as brought about the Scottish Disruption in 1843. Neither the one nor the other exists in France to-day. A bishop was questioned by Leo XIII as to the possibility of a separatist Gallican movement. 'Il n'y a pas de danger,' he replied. 'Alors vous croyez que le peuple français ne se laisserait pas détourner de la religion catholique?' 'Saint Père, le peuple se moque de nous.' The nation is indifferent. Catholicism is a thing as remote from the life of the average citizen as Buddhism: the clergy, as distinct from the Clericals, are not hated, but they are of no account. Active hostility were more hopeful. A revolt necessitates recognition; indifference passes unperceived. And its advance has been rapid:—

Depuis trente ans nous avons perdu toutes les batailles. Bataille électorale: nous sommes à peine une petite minorité. Bataille scolaire: la plupart des enfants élevés dans nos écoles, devenus hommes votent contre nous; ceux qui sortent de nos collèges nous attaquent. Bataille religieuse: le peuple qui était avec nous, il y a trente ans, s'est désaffectionné, nous a lâchés, nous hait aujourd'hui.¹

¹ *Pourquoi les Catholiques ont perdu la bataille*, p. 9.

Various causes may be assigned for this : the deterioration of popular religion—‘ Si vous pouviez vous figurer l’abîme d’idolâtrie où est tombé le clergé français ! ’ wrote Montalembert in 1870 ; its persistent and compromising alliance with reactionary political parties and with all that is least worthy in public life ; the sectarian character which it has assumed. But more fatal than any of these has been the claim to infallibility, the apotheosis of the errors and abuses of the past. A happy inconsistency enables the reformed Churches to throw off this shirt of Nessus. If they assert their inerrancy as a fact, they repudiate it as a dogma. ‘ The purest Churches under heaven are subject to mixture and error,’ says the Westminster Confession : their mistakes and misdeeds can be treated as those of individuals, and disavowed by the community. With Catholicism it is otherwise. There the prerogative, originally loose and floating, has been stereotyped : the Vatican Council embodied it in the Roman Pontiff, who, speaking *ex cathedra*, ‘ possesses that infallibility with which Christ willed His Church to be endowed.’ The vagueness of the specification leaves a loophole for casuists ; but the intention is clear. What the Fathers did not see was that the gift was one which recoiled on its recipient. They thought to equip the Pontiff with Ithuriel’s spear : in fact they forged a weapon useful only as long as it is not used. Leo XIII perceived this, and used it as though he used it not. His successor is less cautious. A catechist was explaining the nature of faith : it was believing on authority what you did not see. ‘ For instance,’ he said, ‘ if God told you that there was a chair in the middle of the room, and you did not see it, would you believe that it was there ? ’ ‘ Yes,’ was the answer : ‘ but ’—dubiously—‘ would you sit down upon it ? ’ Pius X is trying to sit down upon it—with the natural result.

Two consequences would follow the denunciation of the Concordat : one material, the suppression of the Budget des Cultes—that is to say, the financial paralysis of French Catholicism ; the other moral, the acute clericalising of religion—that is to say, the widening of the gulf between religious and national life. On neither can good men look

without misgiving : the effect of the two combined would be to offer France the choice between an impossible religion and no religion at all. The annual sum received by the Church from the nation is estimated at from 37 to 45 million francs—upwards of a million and a half sterling. A question has been raised whether, as this sum was accepted as the equivalent of the confiscated Church lands, the claim to it would lapse with the Concordat. The discussion is academic : it is certain that, with the exception of a few retiring pensions, not a sou would be paid. On the other hand, if anyone supposes that this sum, or anything approaching it, can be raised voluntarily, he must be singularly sanguine. In the mind of the average Frenchman of the middle or lower class the presence of the priest at marriages and funerals adds to the decorum of life. But he expects it to be provided for him at the public expense. An occasional gift supplements the curé's scanty stipend ; but to guarantee the yearly 1,000 or 1,500 francs for the support of a functionary whom he tolerates rather than accepts, and whose services he regards as ornamental rather than necessary, is foreign to his nature. The case of Ireland and the English-speaking countries where Catholicism of the Irish type prevails is not parallel. The Irish, trained to give, and the least provident of races, are intensely Catholic ; the French, unaccustomed to maintain a religious establishment, and frugal to a fault, are Catholic rather by acquiescence than by conviction or sympathy ; in the one case religious is one with national sentiment, in the other the two are opposed. In France, as elsewhere, there are enthusiastic Catholics, but they are a small minority ; and, with the best will in the world, the financing of religion is beyond them. In the towns the voluntary system might work, though at the expense of other charitable funds—Peter's Pence, the *Œuvre de la Propagation de la Foi*, &c. In the country, Brittany excepted, it would break down. The parochial clergy, already subsisting on a minimum wage, would be starved out—gradually in the north, rapidly in the south and east ; and Catholicism, of all forms of Christianity the most dependent on its plant, would be in danger of extinction.

Nothing but a reaction on a large scale could save it ; and not only is there no sign of such a reaction, but the conditions which it presupposes are absent. This is not to say that Catholicism has no future. The vitality of religion is inexhaustible : in the long run the Gospel may be trusted to overcome the alien elements which have attached themselves to it—the corruption of human nature, the commandments of men. But a religious revival is one thing, a Catholic reaction another ; the past survives in the future, but does not, as past, reappear. As idea, as sentiment, as fact, religion is immortal ; but the symbols under which it presents itself change. *Pereunt et imputantur* :—

Our little systems have their day.

So much for the material loss involved in the suppression of the Budget des Cultes : morally, the severing of the ties, such as they are, which unite religion to the State would work even more disastrously : the Church would become a sect. The two notions are contradictory : what the one affirms the other denies. The one represents a backwater, the other the main stream of the world's thought and life ; the one a party, the other mankind. And religion is too powerful a force to be isolated without danger both to itself and to the community. Consciousness is a whole : if it be broken up, disintegration, moral and material, follows. One element balances another : religion, unless it passes over into its other, becomes fanaticism ; the stream which, confined within its banks, fertilises a province, becomes, if it overflows them, a devastating flood. This truth underlies the theory of the relation between Church and State, known as Erastianism. The Divine is not manifested in the Church only ; nor is it only in the world that the colours of good and evil are mixed. The spiritual needs the counterweight of the secular, the clerical of the lay element, theology of knowledge and common sense. Nowhere is this truer than in the Roman Catholic Church of to-day. The restraints imposed upon her by the civil power have been her salvation, in so far as they have acted as a check upon her tendency to narrow herself to the temper and dimensions of a party,

to react against rather than to act with the forces that are moulding mankind. This is to forfeit her Catholic name and birthright. It is easy to enlarge upon the sins of mediæval Christianity : to contrast its ignorance with our enlightenment, its bigotry with our tolerance, its inhumanity with our sensitiveness. Such contrasts are as obvious as the inference suggested is fallacious. The mediæval Church was neither more ignorant, more intolerant, nor more inhuman than the world which it reflected. This is why the mediæval world was Catholic ; the reason why the modern world has ceased to be so is that the Church has ceased to reflect the world. The separation between the two, political rather than religious in origin and character, dates, in its acute form, from the ill-omened alliance between the Spanish-Austrian Monarchy and the Papacy : its several stages, incipient, developed, virulent, are marked by the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Revolution—the conflict being respectively with the intelligence, the conscience, and the liberties of mankind. Neither of the combatants has come off scathless : the absence and the perversion of religion are equally destructive of idealism and elevation of character. But before condemning the modern State for rejecting religion let us consider how irreligious is the religion which it rejects. ‘Cela nous semble ridicule. Mais c’est odieux.’¹ In so far as the State has thriven at the expense of the Church, it is because it represents a higher conscience and culture : in so far as the Church has declined, it is because she has been unfaithful to her idea and calling ; because her standard has become lower than that of what, with a touch of pharisaism, she calls the world. The result has been the alienation of all that is best and most vigorous in French life from religion. Less worthy motives have, no doubt, combined to produce this estrangement : but to ascribe it wholly, or even mainly, to such would be to deceive ourselves ; it is the tragedy of a nation’s faith. ‘O my Mother ! whence is this unto thee, that thou hast good things poured upon thee, and canst not keep them, and bearest children, yet dardest not own them ? How is it that whatever is

¹ *Le Parti noir*, p. 40.

generous in purpose . . . thy power and thy promise, falls from thy bosom, and finds no home within thy arms ? ' Thus on the eve of his secession did Newman apostrophise the Church of England. Time brings strange reverses. Can we read them two generations later and not apply them to the Church of Rome of to-day ?

Perhaps it is not too late to turn back. It is as much in the interest of France as of the Vatican to avoid a final rupture : and as, of the two, France has the quicker intelligence, it is in France that counsels of prudence may be expected to prevail. Neither, it is clear, is desirous of taking the initiative ; each wishes to saddle the other with the odium attaching to the irrevocable step. M. Combes protests that the hostility of the Vatican makes the Concordat unworkable : the Vatican, replies the *Osservatore romano*, has adhered scrupulously to its letter and spirit ; it is the Ministry which, determined on its policy, endeavours hypocritically to shift the responsibility from itself to Rome. A change of caste might facilitate a better understanding. M. Combes is not France ; Cardinal Merry del Val is not the Papacy. Secretaries, popes even, pass ; the Church remains. Be his personal views what they may, the statesman will remember this. Think what we will of her claims and ultimate destiny, the Catholic Church will for long be a factor in the social and political life of Europe. She has that possession which goes for so much both in fact and law. And her past guarantees her future : she will perish, if indeed it be her fate to perish—and he would be a bold prophet who pledged himself to the prediction—not with sudden destruction, but of secular decay. Meanwhile she has it in her to be a veritable thorn in the flesh to society : meeting it here with sullen resistance, there with avowed hostility, here a martyr, there a conspirator or an assailant, as time and opportunity serve. Nothing short of universal domination contents her : she must be oppressed or oppressor ; she is persecuted where she is not supreme. In such a warfare the State is at a disadvantage : subtle, watchful, unwearied, the Church, like the Serpent in the Creation story, lies in wait for her heel. Hence—'au fond tout

gouvernement est anti-religieux . . . l'État a quelque tendance à ne pas aimer beaucoup même la morale.'¹ It might be said, with equal truth, that every Church is anti-social and unethical : and in each case the truth that it contains gives point to the paradox. To repel force, force is necessary. But it is an expedient, not a remedy : the victory over ignorance is won only by knowledge ; that over darkness by light. The temptation of civil society is to forget this. Having to act for the moment, it looks for immediate results in a field where progress must be gradual ; it leans on the arm of flesh. If the French Government has not been without reproach in this matter, the error has not been without provocation, and may be repaired. Will the Vatican meet the Republic halfway ? Will Pius X, even at the last moment, refrain from destroying the *modus vivendi* which his predecessor created and maintained ? The question is one of temper rather than of measures ; of tact than of principle. But the times are revolutionary : and

in revolutionary times moderate parties rarely produce much effect. A moderate man may be, and often is, the best informed, the most rational, the most highly gifted man of his time ; but his very virtues, moral and intellectual alike, disqualify him for the position of a party leader. For this the requisite is enthusiasm, real or pretended ; and for enthusiasm the first condition is, in most cases, either an intellectual incapacity for seeing more than one side of a question, or a moral obliquity which prevents a man from acknowledging another when he does see it.

Such times are not those on which later generations look back with most satisfaction ; nor those which have contributed most efficaciously to the advancement of mankind. A Turgot does more for civilisation than a Robespierre : a Leo XIII for religion than a Pius IX. The State is not the stronger in the long run for being set in opposition to the Church, or the Church to the State. Public support is, as things stand, a condition of an efficient Church, public control of rational religion : the spiritual moralises the civil power, the civil humanises the spiritual ; in idea, at least, the two

¹ Faguet, *Le Libéralisme*, pp. 111, 113.

are one. In fact, alas ! it is otherwise. 'It is so ordered on high,' said the greatest Catholic divine of our generation, 'that in our day Holy Church should present just that aspect to my countrymen which is most consonant with their ingrained prejudice against her, most unpromising for their conversion.'¹ Nor is this so in England only : over how great a part of Europe has religion forgotten her necessary, if underlying, harmony with reason, her hereditary mission to announce peace upon earth and goodwill towards men ! If the harvest is disastrous, it is her own sowing : the crop follows the seed. But her vitality is greater than we conceive it. Distant as it may be, we look for a new seed-time, a second harvest following on a second spring. 'The Church,' wrote Warburton during the now forgotten controversies of the eighteenth century, 'like the ark of Noah, is worth saving not for the sake of the unclean beasts and vermin that almost filled it—and probably made most noise and clamour in it—but for the little corner of rationality, that was as much distressed by the stink within it as by the tempest without.'

NOTE.—It may be of interest to our readers to have before them the actual text of the Concordat.

CONVENTION DU 26 MESSIDOR AN IX
ENTRE LE GOUVERNEMENT FRANÇAIS ET SA SAINTETÉ PIE VII

(Texte du Concordat.)

Le Gouvernement de la République reconnaît que la religion catholique, apostolique et romaine est la religion de la grande majorité des citoyens français.

Sa Sainteté reconnaît également que cette même religion a retiré et attend encore en ce moment le plus grand bien et le plus grand éclat de l'établissement du culte catholique en France et de la profession particulière qu'en font les Consuls de la République.

En conséquence, d'après cette reconnaissance mutuelle,

¹ J. H. Newman, *Via Media* (ed. 1877), Preface.

tant pour le bien de la religion que pour le maintien de la tranquillité intérieure, ils sont convenus de ce qui suit :

ARTICLE PREMIER. La religion catholique, apostolique et romaine sera librement exercée en France. Son culte sera public, en se conformant aux règlements de police, que le Gouvernement jugera nécessaire pour la tranquillité publique.

II. Il sera fait par le Saint-Siège, de concert avec le Gouvernement, une nouvelle circonscription des diocèses français.

III. Sa Sainteté déclare aux titulaires des évêchés français qu'elle attend d'eux avec une ferme confiance, pour le bien de la paix et de l'unité, toute espèce de sacrifices, même celui de leurs sièges.

D'après cette exhortation, s'ils se refusaient à ce sacrifice, commandé par le bien de l'Église (refus, néanmoins, auquel Sa Sainteté ne s'attend pas), il sera pourvu par de nouveaux titulaires au gouvernement des évêchés de la conscription nouvelle, de la manière suivante :

IV. Le premier Consul de la République nommera, dans les trois mois qui suivront la publication de la bulle de Sa Sainteté, aux archevêchés et évêchés de la circonscription nouvelle. Sa Sainteté conférera l'institution canonique suivant les formes établies par rapport à la France avec le changement de gouvernement.

V. Les nominations aux évêchés qui vaqueront dans la suite seront également faites par le premier Consul, et l'institution canonique sera donnée par le Saint-Siège, en conformité de l'article précédent.

VI. Les évêques, avant d'entrer en fonctions, prêteront directement, entre les mains du premier Consul, le serment de fidélité qui était en usage avant le changement de gouvernement, exprimé dans les termes suivants :

'Je jure et promets à Dieu, sur les saints évangiles, de garder obéissance et fidélité au Gouvernement établi par la Constitution de la République française. Je promets aussi de n'avoir aucune intelligence, de n'assister à aucun conseil, de n'entretenir aucune ligue, soit au dedans, soit au dehors, qui soit contraire à la tranquillité publique ; et si, dans mon diocèse ou ailleurs, j'apprends qu'il se trame quelque chose au préjudice de l'État, je le ferai savoir au Gouvernement.'

VII. Les ecclésiastiques du second ordre prêteront le

même serment entre les mains des autorités civiles désignées par le Gouvernement.

VIII. La formule de prière suivante sera récitée à la fin de l'office divin, dans toutes les églises catholiques de France : *Domine, salvam fac Rempublicam ; Domine, salvos fac Consules.*

IX. Les évêques feront une nouvelle circonscription des paroisses de leurs diocèses, qui n'aura d'effet que d'après le consentement du Gouvernement.

X. Les évêques nommeront aux cures.

Leur choix ne pourra tomber que sur des personnes agréées par le Gouvernement.

XI. Les évêques pourront avoir un chapitre dans leur cathédrale et un séminaire pour leur diocèse, sans que le Gouvernement s'oblige à les doter.

XII. Toutes les églises métropolitaines, cathédrales, paroissiales et autres non aliénées, nécessaires au culte, seront mises à la disposition des évêques.

XIII. Sa Sainteté, pour le bien de la paix et l'heureux rétablissement de la religion catholique, déclare que ni elle ni ses successeurs ne troubleront en aucune manière les acquéreurs des biens ecclésiastiques aliénés ; et qu'en conséquence la propriété de ces biens demeurera incommutable entre leurs mains ou celles de leurs ayants cause.

XIV. Le Gouvernement assurera un traitement convenable aux évêques et aux curés dont les diocèses et les cures seront compris dans la circonscription nouvelle.

XV. Le Gouvernement pendra également des mesures pour que les catholiques français puissent, s'ils le veulent, faire en faveur des églises des fondations.

XVI. Sa Sainteté reconnaît, dans le premier Consul de la République française, les mêmes droits et prérogatives dont jouissait près d'elle l'ancien gouvernement.

XVII. Il est convenu entre les parties contractantes que, dans le cas où quelqu'un des successeurs du premier Consul actuel ne serait pas catholique, les droits et prérogatives mentionnés dans l'article ci-dessus, et la nomination aux évêchés, seront réglés, par rapport à lui, par une nouvelle convention.

Les ratifications seront échangées à Paris, dans l'espace de quarante jours.

Fait à Paris, le 26 messidor de l'an IX de la République française.

VI. ANATOLE FRANCE

IN M. Octave Mirbeau's notorious novel—a novel which it would be complimentary to describe as naturalistic—the heroine is warned by her director against the works of M. Anatole France. 'Ne lisez jamais du Voltaire . . . c'est un péché mortel . . . ni du Renan . . . ni de l'Anatole France. Voilà qui est dangereux.' The names are appropriately united : a real, if not precisely an apostolical, succession exists between the three writers. If it would be too much to say of Nature that

To make the third, she joined the former two, it is certain that the author of 'La Rôtisserie de la Reine Pédauque' has much both of Voltaire and of Renan in his composition ; without them he would have been other than he is. Nor is the prohibition of the director untrue to life ; it is improbable that a spiritual adviser would recommend the works of M. Anatole France to those who consulted him as to their reading. If, indeed, these works are not on the 'Index Librorum Prohibitorum,' it must be due to an oversight on the part of the Congregation charged with its compilation. For M. France is an inveterate disturber of the dogmatic slumber to which the natural man takes so kindly, and from which the Church is slow to rouse him. A living note of interrogation, he takes nothing for granted ; he questions, speculates, criticises ; his instinct leads him, if not to deny, at least to doubt. And his scepticism is of the insidious sort that cometh not with observation ; it is conveyed in an apostrophe, a parable, an apologue, and is most dangerous when least obvious and least direct. 'Pontius, te souvient-il de cet homme ?' is the question put

to the ex-Procurator of Judea with regard to the Central Figure of history. 'Pontius Pilate fronça les sourcils et porta la main à son front comme quelqu'un qui cherche dans sa mémoire. Puis, après quelques instants de silence : "Jésus," murmura-t-il, "Jésus de Nazareth ? Je ne me rappelle pas."'¹

To represent M. France as one of the giants of literature would be extravagant. As well endow Ariel with the stature and sinews of a Titan ; this were to miss his distinctive qualities : delicacy, elegance, charm. He belongs to a category of writers who are more read and probably exercise more influence than those of greater name. The latter show us life as a whole ; but life as a whole is too vast and too remote to excite in most of us more than a somewhat languid curiosity : the former confine themselves to what, to those who think and feel at all, is an object of the keenest personal interest—the life of the world we live in. And it is here that M. France excels. His knowledge is wide, his sympathies are many-sided, his power of exposition is unsurpassed : no one has set before us the mind of our time, with its half-lights, its shadowy vistas, its indefiniteness, its haze on the horizon, so vividly as he. Many generations have gone to make it : the heir of a long past, it embodies their achievements and their aspirations, their dreams and their disillusionments, their failures and their regrets. So much learned, so little known ; so much promise, so little fulfilment ; so much blood poured like water on the earth, yet the earth how barren—the harvest how scanty ! To interpret it is no easy matter ; the general impression that it leaves on us is one of bewilderment, of an apparently inextricable confusion of ideas and tendencies. Earnestness is disguised as trifling ; tenderness as cynicism ; piety as indifference ; faith as unbelief. While, on the other hand, we find low standards going with high professions ; immorality posing as virtue ; policy as religion ; the secular as the spiritual ; the ignorance of man as the wisdom of God. The moral of the whole being the old one—that appearances are to be distrusted ; that things are not, or at

¹ *L'Étui de Nacre*, p. 28.

least are seldom, what they seem. Hence the necessity and the justification of scepticism. Believe not every spirit, is sense as well as Scripture ; we question in order that we may not be deceived.

The civilisation of the Latin races, unlike our own, is a city civilisation ; the connotation of such words as urbane, rustic, pagan, bears witness to the respective estimation in which they held town and country life. To the Frenchman Paris is France, and the highest compliment you can pay him is to take him for a Parisian : all that is best and most characteristic in the life of the nation, its quickness, its intelligence, its brilliancy, centres in the capital. With us the reverse is the case. The last thing that an Englishman wishes is to be thought a Londoner : the Cockney is a ridiculous person who drops his ' h's,' and can neither shoot nor ride to hounds. M. France is essentially Parisian, savouring of the asphalte, not of the soil. The autobiographical ' *Livre de mon Ami* ' represents a modest home in which intellectual were of more account than material interests ; a sensitive, observant and somewhat meditative childhood passed in and moulded by the as yet un-Haussmannised city. The training produced an academic talent, with a dash of the boulevard. Paris is not, or was not thirty years ago, on so enormous and unwieldy a scale as London ; and it was a greater centre than London is, or has ever been. The intelligence of the nation was concentrated there ; it possessed a literary tradition ; in spite of their bickerings, which were incessant, the freemasonry of letters formed a bond of union between literary men. The novice knew, at least by sight and by repute, the masters of his craft ; intercourse was easy and informal ; there was a camaraderie between younger and older men. The atmosphere breathed was historical ; not a street but had its memories ; the bouquinists and printsellers on the quays between the Pont Neuf and the Pont Royal with their old books, their old engravings and the bric-à-brac, faded and grey with the dust of years, that speaks to us of generations dead and buried—to have been brought up among these things was in itself a liberal education ; it developed a sense

of the past, and a disposition to regard it not merely as the permanent background of life, but as a constituent of the present, a part of to-day. The most important part, perhaps ; for the past has made us : the living are always, a philosopher reminds us—and more and more as time advances—under the dominion of the dead. So that the transition from the one to the other is easy : to the unsophisticated mind of youth—and there are those who retain it through life—the barriers of time and space are but half closed. Imagination passes them, and a thousand years are as yesterday. The boy of ' *Le Livre de mon Ami* ' is drawn from real life. He reads the ' *Lives of the Saints*,' and he is himself, to the perturbation of the household, a hermit in the Thebaid ; the ' *Odyssey*,' and he is a sailor of the age of the heroes, afloat upon a violet sea. He sees Nausicaa and her maidens at the spring, Circe weaving spells in her hollow caverns, the Cyclops on the cliffs threatening shipwrecked mariners ; the Sirens make music for him as, lashed to the mast and stretching ineffectual hands to the singers, he skirts their perilous coast. So life and the world are idealised, nor can later contact with reality dispel the charm. For reality is what we make it ; to those in whom the Divine dwells it is transfigured, and all things are full of gods. ' *Il est beau . . . d'avoir rêvé dans son enfance : il en reste un parfum et comme une tradition de poésie qui défraie l'âge où l'on n'imagine plus.*'

This manifold inner life has given M. France a rare power of perspective, of reproducing and interpreting the past. His ' *Thaïs* ' is not, perhaps, as edifying as ' *Fabiola*,' but it gives a truer picture of early Christianity ; the mixture of the enthusiast and the demagogue in the Nubian martyr Ahmès ; the gradual undermining of the sanctity of Paphnutius ; the victory of instinct, depraved because unnaturally suppressed, over acquired habit ; the explosion of passion that in an instant wrecks his whole moral life, and reveals the human brute in his native hideousness—all this is actual to the verge of pain. The element of the dervish in the Egyptian solitaries, the kinship of their spirit with that of their Mohammedan successors, this identity in

difference, these contact points between different ages and creeds are noted : 'il y a déjà du marabout et du mahdi dans les vieux moines chrétiens de la vallée du Nil.'¹ The greatest divine of our time ranked Gibbon high among writers of Church history. M. France possesses gifts which, had he specialised in that department, would have marked him out for excellence ; 'pour faire l'histoire d'une religion, il faut ne plus y croire, mais il faut y avoir cru.' It is the pedant only who will fail to estimate aright the power of religion in human life and history ; there is an intolerant and irrational unbelief as well as an intolerant and irrational faith. But those who have even an elementary knowledge of our nature, with its undergrowths, its unconscious returns upon itself, its latent and unsuspected possibilities, will understand the subtle, sensuous and ineffaceable charm of a symbolism which breaks down the wall of partition between the visible and the invisible, and throws the glamour of eternity over the things of time.

Les femmes ont senti passer dans leurs poitrines
 Le mol embrasement d'un souffle oriental.
 Une sainte épouvante a gonflé leurs narines,
 Sous les dieux apparus loin de leur ciel natal . . .
 Elle les voit si beaux ! Son âme avide et tendre,
 Que le siècle brutal fatigua sans retour,
 Cherche entre ces esprits indulgents à qui tendre
 L'ardente et lourde fleur de son dernier amour . . .
 Et Leuconoe goûte éperdument le charme
 D'adorer un enfant et de pleurer un dieu.²

Nor is it women only who are thus influenced ; there is that in us which is deeper than the sex distinction ; human nature is common to women and to men. Religion, however, covers one side only, though a very important side, of human nature ; and M. France is a connoisseur of human nature as a whole. His types are taken from many sources ; they represent all sorts and conditions of men. The grotesque frequenters of the 'Chat maigre,' erratic and out-at-elbows, jostle the elegant frequenters of the salons of the 'Lys rouge' : in the studies of contemporary France, which

¹ *La Vie littéraire*, iii. 141.

² *Les Noces corinthiennes*.

begin with 'L'Orme du Mail' and end with 'M. Bergeret à Paris'—studies which, under a slight form, embody the experience of a shrewd observer, and contain more material for future historians than many more pretentious volumes—*préfets* and generals, ministers and financiers, great ladies and their train of admirers, priests, intransigent and opportunist, pass under our eyes. They are sketches rather than finished portraits; but the art is so skilful that a line suggests a character—there is no need to fill in the detail. The Papal Nuncio, for instance, Monsignor Cima, who, with half-closed eyes, sees everything and commits himself to nothing: how exactly he takes the measure of the aspirants to the vacant see of Tourcoing; how adroitly he turns the conversation from the duties of the episcopate to less burning topics—the vintages of Orleans and the climate of Rome! To know all, it has been said, is to pardon all; it is also, perhaps, if not to lose faith in all, to be not a little disillusioned, to be slow to take men and things at their own valuation. Having learned by experience that heroes are few, the philosopher is not given to hero-worship; aware that ideas, when they become current and take concrete shape, lose much of their original content, he is no enthusiast; his attitude towards life is acquiescent—he takes it as he finds it and as it comes. He would not burn well, disapproving the obstinacy of the martyr only less than the cruelty of the persecutor: 'il maintint ses opinions, jusqu'au feu exclusivement, estimant par avance, avec Montaigne, que mourir pour une idée, c'est mettre à bien haut prix les conjectures.'¹ To some this temper will seem incompatible with idealism in any shape: it destroys, they think, the romance which, for those who have eyes to see, paints life in such exquisite colours, and rends the veil of the temple in twain. A well-known Eton tutor of the last generation discouraged his pupils from reading Thackeray because of his cynicism; the Rabbis, to go further back, esteemed Jeremiah the least of the prophets on account of his fault-finding; this is the reason, they tell us, why his prophecy is inscribed, 'The words of Jeremiah,'² instead of 'The

¹ *La Vie littéraire*, iii. 31.

² Jeremiah i. 1.

word of God.' It is possible, of course, to fix one's attention on the faults of men and things rather than on their excellencies. Those who do this are greatly to be pitied. The best of men fail somewhere, because they are human ; the most necessary and beneficent forms of society—the family, the State, the Church—have their less worthy side, because they are composed of and administered by men. But to have eyes for faults only argues a defective vision : if we can see nothing but what is little in great men, nothing but what is mischievous in great institutions, and nothing but what is contemptible in great ideas, we may be sure that there is something wrong, not with them, but with ourselves.

But there is another side to this. The more important idealising is perceived to be, the more important it becomes to idealise rightly. 'Never marry but for love ; but see that thou lov'st what is lovely' : the lover should be provided with Ithuriel's spear to discern the counterfeit from the true. Too often this is not so ; too often enthusiasm, like love, is blind. And in this case truth revenges itself. If the idea for which we are enthusiastic is false, if the institution which we champion is mischievous, the greater our enthusiasm and the more passionate our championship, the more injurious are both to ourselves and to the community of which we are members. Enthusiasm is like a river, beneficent when confined between its banks, a devastating flood when it overflows them : a power uncontrolled, mighty for evil ; guided by knowledge and regulated by reason, mighty for good. It is difficult, indeed, to unite the two—enthusiasm and reason ; for the one is quick, the other slow. The fire of passion kindles at a touch ; knowledge advances step by step and tentatively ; we are impatient of her reserves, her qualifications, her circumspection, her measured pace. A certain narrowness of vision goes with the temperament of action. It was easy, for example, to burn heretics, when men were certain that the heretic was a centre of contagion ; it was easy to send nobles and priests to the scaffold, as long as men were convinced that with their disappearance a new age of

liberty and virtue would open. But as soon as we are not quite sure action is paralysed ; and the more we know, the more we realise the many-sidedness of things, the complexity of what at first seemed simple, the more impossible we find it to be quite sure. Especially do we learn to distrust great names and high professions. Liberalism does not always make for liberty ; churches do not always make for religion ; party divisions have ceased to correspond—probably they never did correspond—with facts. The hard-and-fast lines which we draw between our conceptions exist for thought only, not in things ; and if we transfer them to things we get into hopeless difficulty. Men are neither good nor bad, but a mixture of good and evil ; ideas are neither true nor false, they contain some truth and some falsehood. Things, in short, shade off into one another : they are neither wholly this nor wholly that—it depends upon the point of view from which we look at them—but both, or neither, or something between the two. And a man's usefulness in life depends, as a rule, on his recognising this ; nothing bars the way to a higher ideal so effectually as committal to and persistence in a lower ; the Church may become the enemy of religion, a party of the State.

How many, taking names for things, have committed themselves in early years to ideals which their maturer judgment disapproved, and against which their conscience, better informed, revolted : have discovered too late that the gods to whose service their youthful ardours pledged them were fashioned by human ignorance and ambition from the commonest clay. Hence, too often, irretrievable moral ruin. Life is lived out in bad faith, because men are too indolent or too self-interested to break away from the bondage of habit and circumstance : a false sentiment of loyalty to the past and to engagements entered into in ignorance of their real nature ensures a nominal allegiance to a creed which has ceased to command belief or respect. It is an allegiance as destitute of honour as of reality ; if there is in the world such a thing as atheism, as infidelity, it is here. Religion is rejected because the superstition which has been taken for religion is seen in its true colours ;

God is held a thing of naught, because the gods of the heathen, which we ignorantly worshipped, are recognised as the work of men's hands. And we find ourselves stranded high and dry upon the shore : the tide of life rolls by, but we are outside its genial current, without usefulness or hope in the world. Such a state is existence, not life. For many, perhaps for most of us, doubt is a duty—not for the doubt's sake, but in order to know for certain, and so be able to reject the evil and choose the good.

M. Bergeret, of the '*Histoire contemporaine*,' is a doubter of this sort. He distinguishes, for example, the substance of the commonwealth from its form so sharply as to seem an indifferent patriot. The explanation is that, remembering the high endeavours that made and the high hopes that welcomed democracy, he is indignant in his heart of hearts that the results of democracy should be what they are. Enthusiasm for the Jew préfet, M. Worms-Clavelin, or the venal senator, M. Laprat-Teulet, would be misplaced. The republicans of the first generation pictured more heroic representatives of the sovereignty of the people than these. But the actual falls short of the ideal, which, indeed, would not be an ideal were it otherwise. When the legitimist Abbé Lantaigne declaims against the Third Republic, he answers, in the vein and with the sincerity of a candid friend to the incriminated form of government :—

Ce régime est, peu s'en faut, tel que vous le représentez. Et c'est encore celui que je préfère. Tous les liens y sont relâchés, ce qui affaiblit l'État, mais soulage les personnes, et procure une certaine facilité de vivre, et une liberté que détruisent malheureusement les tyrannies locales. La corruption sans doute y paraît plus grande que dans les monarchies. Cela tient au nombre et à la diversité des gens qui sont portés au pouvoir. Mais cette corruption serait moins visible si le secret en était mieux gardé. Le défaut de secret et le manque de suite rendent toute entreprise impossible à la République démocratique. Mais, comme les entreprises des monarchies ont le plus souvent ruiné les peuples, je ne suis pas trop fâché de vivre sous un gouvernement incapable de grands desseins. . . . Le pire défaut du régime actuel est de coûter fort cher. . . . Ils s'aperçoit qu'il est embarrassé.

Et ses embarras sont plus grands qu'il ne croit. Ils augmenteront encore. Le mal n'est pas nouveau. C'est celui dont mourut l'ancien régime. Monsieur l'abbé, je vais vous dire une grande vérité : tant que l'État se contente des ressources que lui fournissent les pauvres, tant qu'il a assez des subsides que lui assurent, avec une régularité mécanique, ceux qui travaillent de leurs mains, il vit heureux, tranquille, honoré. Mais dès que ce malheureux État, pressé par le besoin, fait mine de demander de l'argent à ceux qui en ont, et de tirer des riches quelque faible contribution, on lui fait sentir qu'il commet un odieux attentat, viole tous les droits, manque de respect à la chose sacrée, détruit le commerce et l'industrie, et écrase les pauvres en touchant aux riches. . . . L'État touche à la rente. Il est perdu. . . . Nos ministres se moquent de nous en parlant de péril clérical ou de péril socialiste. Il n'y a qu'un péril, le péril financier. La République commence à s'en apercevoir. Je la plains, je le regretterai. J'ai été nourri sous l'Empire, dans l'amour de la République. 'Elle est la justice,' me disait mon père, professeur de rhétorique au lycée de Saint-Omer. Il ne la connaissait pas. Elle n'est pas la justice. Mais elle est la facilité. . . . Pourvu qu'elle vive, elle est contente. Elle gouverne peu. Je serais tenté de l'en louer plus que de tout le reste. Et puis qu'elle gouverne peu, je lui pardonne de gouverner mal. Je soupçonne les hommes d'avoir, de tout temps, beaucoup exagéré les nécessités du gouvernement et les bienfaits d'un pouvoir fort. Assurément les pouvoirs forts font les peuples grands et prospères. Mais les peuples ont tant souffert, au long des siècles, de leur grandeur et de leur prospérité, que je conçois qu'ils y renoncent. La gloire leur a coûté trop cher pour qu'on ne sache pas gré à nos maîtres actuels de nous en procurer que de la coloniale. Si l'on découvrait enfin l'inutilité de tout gouvernement, la République de M. Carnot aurait préparé cette inappréciable découverte. Et il faudrait lui en avoir quelque reconnaissance. Toute réflexion faite, je me sens très attaché à nos institutions.¹

Such qualified appreciation would scarcely satisfy a convinced republican ; nor, royalist as he is, does it commend itself to M. Lantaigne, who, with the instinct of a priest,

¹ *L'Orme du Mail*, p. 228.

puts his finger on the scepticism that underlies it. 'Vous vous exprimez agréablement, monsieur Bergeret. Les rhéteurs parlaient de la sorte dans Rome quand Alaric y entra avec ses Visigoths. Toutefois les, rhéteurs du V^e siècle jetaient sous les térébinthes de l'Esquiline des pensées moins vaines. Car alors Rome était chrétienne. Vous ne l'êtes plus.' The answer, perhaps, is that scepticism, if this be scepticism, is in the air of our time ; we can escape it only by living in the past, or by dividing ourselves into water-tight compartments—one for religion, the other for real life. The former course is the refuge of despair, the latter an admission of indifference or insincerity. In vain do we attempt to retain methods of thought and modes of feeling when the conditions which made them possible have passed away.

To say that mediæval conceptions of the world and life were fixed, while modern are fluid, may appear an overstatement. The principle of development was at work in mediæval society, or it could not have, as it did, developed ; there is an element of stability in our own, or it could not, as it does, hold together. But certainly fixity was the characteristic of mediæval thought. The universe, the expression of the Divine will, reflected the Divine unchangingness ; the vault of heaven stood fast above us, the earth below. And the permanence of the external frame in which life was set found a parallel in the inner world of knowledge ; truth was one, revelation final, dogma yesterday, to-day, and for ever the same. The social order as it stood was of Divine appointment : the two swords, the spiritual and temporal power, had been delegated by Christ to their respective holders ; the powers that be are ordained of God. And the future was as stereotyped as the present : heaven or hell, one or other, lay before the individual, each without change or respite—bliss or torment unceasing and without end. Then, indeed, as now, the facts were too large for the theory ; then, as now, a compromise with them had to be, and, as a matter of fact, was, effected. But the theory was as has been stated. We may call it the mediæval theory, for it was that on which the mediæval world built and was built.

Our own standpoint is diametrically opposed to this : Becoming rather than Being is the note of the world as we conceive it : all things change. The permanence even of Nature is apparent only : the earth we live on is the scene of a perpetual process of transformation ; in the abyss of space in which they are suspended worlds are born and die. Man is not a fixed point, but a term in an ascending series : the mind and its content have become what they are in virtue of a movement which carries thought and things with it in its ceaseless growth. The society in which we live has taken shape by slow degrees under the action and reaction of its several factors. The Republic, which M. Lantaigne abhors and M. Bergeret tolerates, is the outcome of the Empire and the Monarchy ; conditioned—that is to say, by history—the heir of the past. Our religious beliefs and institutions, unchanging as we are apt to conceive them, can be traced to humble and scarcely recognisable germs, which have developed according to known laws and under definite historical influences ; the world has moulded the Church rather than the Church the world. And the mediæval standpoint has become impossible. We do not look out with awe-struck eyes at a world which God has made and in which He has placed us ; rather we endeavour to make ourselves acquainted with the mechanism of a system which men have put together and have to keep in working order, adjusting, balancing, correcting, as time and necessity suggest. The two views are not exclusive ; points of contact may be established between them. But according as we survey the world from one or the other we incline to acquiescence or to criticism, to resignation or to reform.

Again, there is a further distinction than that between mediæval and modern—that between men of thought and men of action, those who speculate on and those who work in the world. The temperament which surveys the world is other than that which makes and fashions it. The one regards it as a spectator, the other as an actor : the one looks at it from without, impersonally ; the other from within, as a thing of which he himself is part and parcel, a dwelling which it is his interest to make habitable and

commodious for its inmates, of whom he is one. M. France belongs to the former class. His sense of humour saves him from assuming the airs of a superior person : he includes himself in the world which he surveys. But his opinion of his fellow-men is not flattering. His estimate of their understanding is low, and of their morality lower ; he expects little of them, hence his evenness of temper : he is not disappointed when little comes. He believes, as many eminent persons—Johnson among them—have believed before him, that laws and government can do little to increase the happiness or to improve the fortunes of mankind. This belief, erroneous in itself, would be mischievous in the extreme were it generally, or even widely, held. That everything is much the same, and that nothing much matters—quietism of this kind would bring life to a standstill ; and the first thing is to live. Perhaps, at least in the West, it is scarcely more than skin-deep. It is difficult to conceive Johnson practising non-resistance ; and M. France's theoretical aloofness has neither chilled his sympathies nor weakened his powers of action when action became imperative on right-minded men. And while there is little danger, taking men as they are, of the attitude of passivity becoming common, it is not without its use, as a theory, in the way of protest against the simplicity, real or affected, which supposes that a stroke of an official pen can, like the fiat of Omnipotence, make and unmake, and against the sentimental and facile optimism which traces the evils that afflict humanity to the misdeeds of rulers and the injustice of laws. The problems of life are more complex than we suppose. Human nature changes, but it changes slowly ; opinions, beliefs, standards of conduct modify, but we do not see them moving ; we see only that they have moved. We need not quarrel, then, with M. France for his scepticism, for scepticism is part of the spirit of the time, from which we can no more escape than from our shadow ; for his quietism, which need not be taken too literally ; nor for the copious douches of cold water which he administers to unworthy ideals, unreasonable hopes, and unreal enthusiasms. Ridicule does not necessarily kill ; it discriminates, supplying what in

the sphere of mind corresponds to the struggle for existence in Nature : the unfit perish under it, the fit survive.

Schools of literature succeed one another more rapidly in France than here : that in which M. Anatole France graduated seems like an echo out of a past more distant than the years, when we reckon them, make it. The thoughts of the author come to us filtered into new forms through the strata that lie between us and the 'Parnasse Contemporain.' The critical note predominates in them. Novels, such as 'Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard' ; historical studies, such as 'Thaïs' ; tales and sketches, such as 'L'Étui de Nacre' or 'Le Puits de Sainte-Claire,' all reflect the same temper—a temper ironical, yet kindly ; mocking, yet with a considerable admixture of sentiment ; sceptical of appearances and professions, yet not without reverence for what deserves reverence ; the scepticism is not that of the heart, but of the head. The criticisms in the strict sense of the word, republished under the title of 'La Vie littéraire,' originally appeared in the *Temps*. It is not too much to say that they recall the 'Causeries du Lundi,' the golden age of Sainte-Beuve. Not all the writers who pass under review in these four volumes are familiar to the average English reader ; nor is criticism a plant which flourishes on English soil. We are a serious people, and treat literature seriously : the reviewer takes his seat on the bench with dignity, conscious of the black cap in reserve. There are occasions when solemn functions of this kind are called for ; when necessary M. France, too, can be judicial, and deal with literary crime and pretension as they deserve.¹ But cases calling for such treatment are exceptional ; for everyday use the *causerie*, with its fineness, its delicacy, its lightness of touch, is to be preferred. The author of 'Essays in Criticism' attempted to naturalise this style among us, but he left no successor ; and the attempt cost him his reputation for seriousness. People would not believe that he was in earnest ; his sermons—and he preached excellent sermons—were received with a smile. This ponderousness argues a certain provincialism in English

¹ *La Vie littéraire*, i. 225 ('La Terre'), and ii. 56 ('Hors de la Littérature').

thinking, an incapacity for effects of light and shade. In criticism *nuance* is everything; the critic to the manner born produces his effects with a touch. He deals in irony, rather than in denunciation; in suggestion, rather than in direct assertion or denial. He conveys an idea in a tone; a line calls up a picture; he does not dogmatise; he shows us what we are thinking, though we do not know how to express it, ourselves. And it is to criticism that the future belongs.

La critique est la dernière en date de toutes les formes littéraires; elle finira peut-être par les absorber toutes. Elle convient admirablement à une société très civilisée dont les souvenirs sont riches et les traditions déjà longues. Elle est particulièrement appropriée à une humanité curieuse, savante et polie. Pour prospérer, elle suppose plus de culture que n'en demandent toutes les autres formes littéraires. Elle eut pour créateurs Montaigne, Saint-Evremond, Bayle et Montesquieu. Elle procède à la fois de la philosophie et de l'histoire. Il lui a fallu, pour se développer, une époque d'absolue liberté intellectuelle. Elle remplace la théologie, et, si l'on cherche le docteur universel, le saint Thomas d'Aquin du XIX^e siècle, n'est-ce pas à Sainte-Beuve qu'il faut songer? ¹

Those who set a high value on style will place M. France in the very first rank of contemporary stylists: since Renan no one has written such French as he. 'Il s'y trouve du Racine, du Voltaire, du Flaubert, du Renan; et c'est toujours de l'Anatole France. Cet homme a la perfection dans la grâce: il est l'extrême fleur du génie latin.'² If M. Lemaître's appreciation seems pitched in too high a key, let the reader open 'Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard,' almost at random: 'Étoiles qui avez lui sur la tête légère ou pesante de tous mes ancêtres oubliés, c'est à votre clarté que je sens éveiller en moi un regret douloureux. Je voudrais avoir un fils qui vous voie encore quand je ne serais plus.' Let him turn to the apostrophe to Verlaine: 'Tu as failli, mais tu as confessé ta faute. Tu fus un malheureux, mais tu n'as jamais menti. Pauvre Samaritain,

¹ *La Vie littéraire*, vol. i. Préface.

² *Les Contemporains*, vi. 275.

à travers ton babil d'enfant et tes hoquets de malade, il t'a été donné de prononcer des paroles célestes. Nous sommes des Pharisiens. Tu es le meilleur et le plus heureux.' ¹ Or to the exhortation addressed by M. Jérôme Coignard, under the porch of Saint-Benoît-le-Bétourné, to Catherine :—

Je ne me suis jamais fait une idée exagérée du péché de la chair. C'est une justice qu'on peut me rendre. . . . Mais ce que je ne puis souffrir, c'est la bassesse de l'âme, c'est l'hypocrisie, c'est le mensonge, et cette crasse ignorance, qui fait de votre frère Ange un capucin accompli. Vous prenez dans son commerce, mademoiselle, une habitude de crapule qui vous ravale bien au-dessous de votre condition, laquelle est celle de fille galante. J'en sais les hontes et les misères ; mais c'est un état bien supérieur à celui de capucin. Songez, mademoiselle, à toutes les vertus dont vous pourriez encore vous orner, dans votre incertain métier, et dont une seule peut-être vous ouvrirait un jour le paradis, si vous n'étiez soumise et assujettie à cette bête immonde. Tout en vous laissant prendre ça et là ce qu'il faut bien finalement qu'on vous laisse quand on s'en va, vous pourriez, Catherine, fleurir en foi, en espérance et en charité, aimer les pauvres et visiter les malades. Vous pourriez être aumônière et compatissante, et vous délecter chastement à la vue du ciel, des eaux, des bois et des champs. Vous pourriez, le matin, ouvrant votre fenêtre, louer Dieu en écoutant chanter les oiseaux. Vous pourriez, aux jours de pèlerinage, gravir la montagne de Saint-Valérien et là, sous le calvaire, pleurer doucement votre innocence perdue. Vous pourriez faire en sorte que Celui qui seul lit dans les cœurs dise : ' Catherine est ma créature, et je la reconnais aux restes d'une belle lumière qui n'est point éteinte en elle.' ²

The thing could not be better done ; and here the style is the man ; the substance and the form, the thought and its expression are one. For symmetry and sense of proportion are not qualities of form only ; they work from within outward, and are significant of a temperament. In spite of the subjectivity of standpoint with which M. Brunetière reproaches him, M. France is a classic : he has the sense of

¹ *La Vie littéraire*, iii. 318.

² *Les Opinions de M. Jérôme Coignard*, p. 57.

limit; the eighteenth century is strong in him, and in an age when transgressors wax wanton his trumpet gives no uncertain sound. He is a classic, however, with the reserves of modern psychology: 'la vérité est qu'on ne sort jamais de soi-même.' The bearings of this position are obvious: 'telle que je l'entends, la critique est, comme la philosophie et l'histoire, une espèce de roman à l'usage des esprits avisés et curieux. Le bon critique est celui qui raconte les aventures de son âme au milieu des chefs-d'œuvre.'¹ But he is too urbane, too tolerant to be a fanatic; remembering that strife is the father of all things, he prefers rather than excludes. Party names in literature, as in politics and religion, are misleading; they cover men who differ widely from one another in temperament, sympathy, and aim. From Chateaubriand and Victor Hugo to M. Zola and the later schools of our own day is a long step; but Romanticists, Naturalists, Symbolists, Decadents, differ as they may in other respects, have one note in common—the abnormal, the extravagant; they agree in defiance of law. Law tends to become convention, they urge, and convention conventionality; we must be living, human, if we are to depict and gain the ear of men. But it is a sound instinct which bids us distrust the *ἄπειρον*: the sense of limit belongs to sanity, and is natural to normally constituted minds. We do not take experience as it comes, haphazard; we select, adapt, rationalise, putting something mental, something of ourselves, as it were, into it before it is ready for use. Neglect of this process of preparation has made Naturalism a by-word: 'le naturalisme interdit à l'écrivain tout acte intellectuel, toute manifestation morale; il mène droit à l'imbecillité flamboyante. C'est ainsi qu'il a produit la littérature dite décadente et symbolique. Son crime impardonnable est de tuer la pensée.'²

Again, art is the embodiment in fixed forms of the element of beauty in Nature; not everything that is to be found in Nature, but the beautiful only, is its subject-matter. If this be idealism—and all art is, in a sense, idealism—it can be avoided only by a counter-idealism which is the negation

¹ *La Vie littéraire*, vol. i. Préface.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 305.

of art. For the stereotyping involved in the embodiment of the idea in a concrete form magnifies ; and the naturalist school sees and presents the world out of focus in consequence : the beast in man is, like the head of the Gorgon, death to those who see it. Art, in short, is to Nature what mind is to sense : it discriminates and interprets. Under its action the universe of things, in itself formless, takes form and meaning ; the world as we know it springs to being before our eyes. Here, as throughout, relativity is the condition of knowledge : to no two human beings does Nature present precisely the same aspect ; to no two minds does the same formula express precisely the same meaning. But the relative is not the subjective : there is an approximate standard to which, as a matter of fact, normally constituted faculties conform. Our sensations and judgments—that is to say, though not the same, are similar, and vary within certain limits. How are trespassers on the forbidden land beyond to be dealt with ? How are we to meet offences against the code of letters ?—against good taste, or society, or morals ? Considerations of another order suggest themselves too easily ; a short and summary method of procedure commends itself at once to the moralist and the doctrinaire. But the weapons of our warfare are spiritual ; ideas must be met by ideas. M. France supports this doctrine on *a priori* grounds.

Certaines philosophies qui portent en elles la négation de toute morale ne peuvent entrer dans l'ordre des faits que sous la forme du crime. Dès qu'elles se font acte elles tombent sous la vindicte des lois. Je persiste à croire, toutefois, que la pensée a dans sa sphère propre des droits imprescriptibles, et que tout système philosophique peut être légitimement exposé.¹

Reasoning of this sort is, perhaps, not very conclusive : the liberty of prophesying may be based on grounds which, if less abstract, are less assailable—experience and utility. The theories propounded by M. Adrian Sixte in 'Le Disciple,' to take the case which M. France has in view,

¹ *La Vie littéraire*, iii. 62.

are detestable, and subversive of morals and of society. But there is one thing more injurious in the long run to morals and to society than their propagation—that is, their suppression by force. Translated into action, the law deals with them. And the law is no respecter of theories : free will and determinism are alike indifferent to it. Its object is not to punish the criminal, but to defend the community from crime. ‘You are sentenced,’ said the judge to the horse-stealer, ‘not because you have stolen a horse, but in order that horses may not be stolen.’ But as long as theories remain words only, experience bids us let them be ; the policy of the Inquisition is a blunder as well as, or even more than, a crime. In the province of ideas, at least, force is no remedy : the two are not parallel ; as well take up a cudgel against a ghost. Nor could the control of opinion by authority, were it possible, fail to be mischievous ; no authority can safely be entrusted with such control, for authority supports not what ought to be, but what is. It opposes change as such : while, even where the proposed change seems to be, or is, for the worse, we dare not permit its advocates to be silenced. The colours of good and evil are too mixed to make this tolerable ; we must let the two grow together till the harvest, and have faith in the power of good to hold its own. In times of panic we forget this, and clamour for exceptional legislation against the anarchy which threatens the social order, and will bring down, we think, the fabric of civilisation about our ears. This fabric, however, is made of stronger stuff than we suppose, and will outlast its assailants. For society is founded not on convention, but on human nature ; and this may be trusted to assert itself, theorise as men will.

The eighteenth century, it has been said, is strong in M. France : he has embodied much of its spirit, sceptical at once and humanitarian, in what is, perhaps, his happiest creation—M. l’Abbé Jérôme Coignard, sometime Professor of Rhetoric at the College of Beauvais and Librarian to the Bishop of Séz ; subsequently, his philosophy unaffected by his changed fortunes, preceptor to Jacques Tournebroke, and the oracle of the Rôtisserie de la Reine Pédauque. Few

characters in fiction are more living than this unconventional ecclesiastic ; few possess a richer store of human nature, or sounder qualities of head and heart. We regard his frailties with indulgence, as arguing neither malice nor depravity ; from more serious faults, from the defects of his age and calling, he is free. ‘ Sur les racines de l’orthodoxie, son âme luxuriante fleurit singulièrement en épicurisme et en humilité.’¹ Light lie the earth upon him ! it covers many a worse man, many a less worthy Christian than he. In him, as in M. Bergeret, of the *Histoire Contemporaine*, and M. Sylvestre Bonnard, Membre de l’Institut, we have the temper of the philosopher applied, with difference of character and circumstance, to life—a temper acute, perhaps somewhat over-tolerant, a little wearied, slow to action, inclined in theory at least to despond. The thinker is seldom a radical reformer : his vocation is to deal with ideas rather than with things. Indirectly, indeed, and in the long run, thought realises itself, for the rational is the real and the real is the rational ; but, for practical purposes, pure has to be translated into applied science, and in so complex an organisation as society change is slow. The philosopher would not, perhaps, have it otherwise ; but, if his sense of measure is offended by the fanaticism of revolution, he does not for all that take the established order of things at its own valuation ; it is at best, he is aware, a working compromise based on and reflecting the passions, the prejudices, and the unintelligence of the successive generations by which it has been framed. M. Coignard certainly formed no exaggerated idea of its origin or of its character ; his opinion of human capacity and disinterestedness was small. But ‘ il méprisait les hommes avec tendresse ’ : disillusionment exists without bitterness in those who remember that they are subject to the common lot, and share, in a greater or less degree, the common frailties of men.

It is the fashion to disparage the eighteenth century intellectually, and even more morally ; to represent it as an age of ‘ light without love.’ As a fact, it was light rather than

¹ *Les Opinions de M. Jérôme Coignard*, p. 17.

love that was wanting to it : its enthusiasm for humanity was unbounded, but its knowledge was defective ; the data at its disposal were inadequate to establish the conclusions based upon them. The philosophers of the ' Illumination ' remind us in many respects of the early Ionians, Heraclitus, Democritus, and their contemporaries ; they anticipated their evidence, and guessed rather than knew. But in each case the guesses were so happy that it is difficult to put them down as mere conjectures : the scientific use of the imagination precedes science ; and if this use is not always as scientific as could be desired, wisdom is justified of her children ; it is through error, manifold and various, that we enter into the kingdom of truth. The Social Contract never, as a matter of fact, existed, but it served as a lever to overthrow a corrupt and effete society. Natural religion was a figment of philosophers, but it acted as a check upon the extravagances put forward in the name of revealed. The main force of the movement, however, was moral. Conduct is of more account with the generality of men than theory ; absolutism perished not because the absolutist idea was absurd, but because absolute rulers made themselves unbearable ; the wickedness of Churchmen inflicted more injury on religion than did the superstitions of popular belief. The misfortune of the ' Illumination ' was that it passed out of the hands of the few into those of the many. Hence revolution, and consequent reaction ; the erection of barriers, ephemeral indeed, but mischievous and exasperating, across the natural course of the stream. After so terrible a convulsion as that of '93, reconstruction of some sort was a necessity : the roof, the walls, the very foundations of the social edifice, were overthrown. And it was, perhaps, rather the misfortune than the fault of the builders that much of the reconstruction was jerry-built. Their aim was to restore the past. But life is not always to be reckoned by years : the growth of centuries had been crowded into the generation that lay between 1815 and the convocation of the States General ; the past could not be restored. Canning was the one statesman of the period who saw this, but he was powerless ; the tide set irresistibly

the other way. And the theorising of the Restoration was scarcely less mischievous than that of the Revolution. The phantom of Legitimacy replaced that of Liberty as the idol of the theatre and the market-place; the White succeeded the Red Terror; the fallacies of De Maistre, the least Christian if the most Catholic of philosophers, rivalled in reputation and in paradox those of Rousseau. The bow was stretched to the verge of snapping: economic difficulties aggravated political unrest; the Europe of the first half of the century was seething with moral and material discontent. This breakdown of the work of construction showed unmistakably that the analysis of the previous age, so far from being excessive, had not been carried far enough: it was continued in the nationalist movement, which, sweeping away the artificial states system, galvanised into temporary existence by the diplomacy of the Holy Alliance, made Italy and Germany; in the economics of Lassalle and Marx, in the biology of Darwin, in the theology of Strauss and Baur. Nor is the process within measurable distance of completion: the work that lies before the twentieth century is, in the first instance, critical; the edifice raised prematurely and on unsound foundations by the nineteenth must be cleared away. Construction on a large and lasting scale is reserved for the peaceful reign of some coming Solomon; in an age of strife it can be provisional only. We are

Standing between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born.

We must be content, then, with expedients; a *modus vivendi* is all that can be looked for between old and new. In many respects M. France is a child of the 'Illumination': he possesses its Voltairian humour, its keen eye for pretence and unreality, its indignation against oppression. What is wanting to him is its hopefulness, its certainty of the future:—

Pour ma part je prends peu d'intérêt à ce qui se fait dans le cabinet du prince, observant que le train de la vie n'en est pas changé, qu'après les réformes les hommes sont, comme devant, égoïstes, avares, lâches et cruels, tour à tour

stupides et furieux, et qu'il s'y trouve toujours un nombre à peu près égal de nouveau-nés, de mariés, de cocus et de pendus, en quoi se manifeste le bel ordre de la société. Cet ordre est stable, monsieur, et rien ne saurait le troubler, car il est fondé sur la misère et l'imbécillité humaine, et ce sont là des assises qui ne manqueront jamais. Tout l'édifice en acquiert une solidité qui défie l'effort des plus mauvais princes et de cette foule ignare de magistrats dont ils sont assistés.¹

This is not the spirit of the eighteenth century; the spirit of the eighteenth century was more vigorous and more assured. The optimism of the Encyclopædists, indeed, was premature; their historical sense was undeveloped; they underestimated the complexity of the subject-matter with which they had to deal. The scientific advance of the last half-century has opened our eyes to this; the world is larger, time vaster, man more ancient, his progress slower, than we supposed. But optimism, modified indeed by knowledge and reflection, yet still optimism, is the conclusion that best accords with and accounts for the facts. The complaint of the bankruptcy of science can have a meaning only for those who have formed an unscientific notion of what science is and what it can perform. If we have supposed that material prosperity of itself ensures moral progress, that improvements in the mechanism of society solve social problems, that the most accurate theological knowledge guarantees a virtuous and religious life, we are, indeed, doomed to disappointment; but the fault lies not with science, but in ourselves. Science will not dispense us from the necessity of effort, of the long restraint and self-mastery by which, and by which only, character is formed. It is quackery, not science, that promises quick transformations; no science can think, feel, or act for us: we must think, feel, and act for ourselves. It can show the way; but it is we who must walk in it; and it is we who are bankrupt, not science, if we refuse.

M. France's attitude to religion is ambiguous; a contemporary critic contrasts the piety of his imagination with

¹ *Les Opinions de M. Jérôme Coignard*, p. 106.

the impiety of his thought. The judgment passed upon him by the world of religious party will probably be that of M. Mirbeau's *aumônier*—'Voilà qui est dangereux.' The world of religious party knows, or should know, its business ; and from its own standpoint its judgment is most likely correct. It is improbable that M. Anatole France will undertake the pilgrimage *ad limina*, and be received at the Vatican ; 'Quid Romæ faciam ? mentiri nescio,' would perhaps be his answer were the proposal made to him ; these things are not in his line. But neither are they necessarily evidences of religion ; the interests of religion, and those of religious party, are not necessarily the same. There is no commoner fallacy than that of equivocation ; Latin differs from Teutonic sentiment with regard to religion mainly because by the same name each, the Latin and the Teuton, understands a different thing. To the latter, religion means piety ; to the former polity ; to the one it is personal, and inseparable from conduct—to which it adds an element of emotion and aspiration ; to the other it is corporate, standing first and foremost for submission to the ecclesiastical organisation which, covering the world with its network, has its centre and focus in Rome.

This is the conception of religion presented in the acute study of Catholicism in France contained in the 'Histoire contemporaine.' Its characteristic feature is the substitution of the outward for the inward. An organisation so centralised, so world-wide, so persistent, tends to become an end in itself. The best and wisest men in the Church have fought against this tendency, but it has been too strong for them ; authority magnifies its office ; historical causes one after another—the breakdown of the Conciliar system in the fifteenth century, the instinct of self-preservation against the encroachments of the civil power, the violent reaction following first on the Reformation and then on the Revolution—all have contributed to the centripetal movement in Latin Christianity, and increased the power and significance of the Papacy. The hostility of Catholicism to science has been exaggerated. A great body moves slowly ; Rome, which is not, and has never been, a seat of

learning, is frankly not interested in theology, and neither understands nor is tolerant of those who are. But, as a matter of human prudence, she may be trusted not to assume an irreconcilable attitude to the knowledge of the average man; and, as what the scholar knows to-day the average man knows to-morrow, the question between the Church and science resolves itself into one of time.¹ Nor will dogma, in appearance, but in appearance only, so unchanging, stand in the way of this gradual process of accommodation; for Catholics, dogma is not so much definite doctrinal teaching as regulation—a matter of ecclesiastical discipline administered by the Pope.² The real peril of the Roman Church is only indirectly intellectual; primarily, as was the case in the Middle Ages, it is religious and moral. It lies in the growing suspicion, manifesting itself with or without reason in the most unexpected quarters, that religion is made a cloak for policy; 'that the Church, instead of being a purely spiritual organisation, is practically a huge political machine worked for mundane ends by worldly minded men.'

It is possible, no doubt, to distinguish. The Northern conscience is apt to take the institutional side of Catholicism too seriously; to forget that it is conditioned by existing circumstances and subordinate to the ideal. The Curia is not the Church; and even in the Church the human is more prominent than the Divine element. The more this is perceived to be so, the more a hard externalism threatens to crush out the life of the spirit, the more instinctively the Christian consciousness falls back, with the mystics, on what after all is the substance of religion—personal spiritual experience, remembering that the King's daughter is glorious, not without, but within. 'L'acte de foi le plus méritoire que puisse faire de nos jours un catholique, c'est de croire que l'Église actuelle renferme l'Église idéale, comme la chrysalide sombre et difforme le gracieux papillon.' But the act is not an easy one, for the generality of men do not draw nice distinctions; they live on the surface of

¹ So it appeared to the writer in 1902, during the Pontificate of Leo XIII.

² Harnack, *History of Dogma*, i. 9, note (German edition, 1894).

things, and judge by what they see. Hence much of what goes by the name of anti-Clericalism—a movement not, indeed, without its follies and even its crimes, but embodying, in spite of these things, a protest not against what is good in religion, but against what is evil ; against the degradation of the religious idea.

Among ourselves the possibility of the revival of mediævalism as more than a passing fashion is so remote that we do not always fairly judge those whose circumstances differ from our own. Catholicism as a religion is one thing : Catholicism as a polity is quite another. And it is under the latter rather than the former aspect that it presents itself in Catholic countries ; the outburst of religious and race hatred, hardly yet extinct, of which the Dreyfus case was the expression, serves as an illustration, opportune and not soon to be forgotten, of its character and fruits. There is a piety which neither elevates the understanding nor enlarges the heart. If piety, in any sense of the word, is scarcely the attribute which we associate with the works of M. Anatole France, at least they possess qualities which are incompatible with piety of this description : ‘on y trouvera une parfaite sincérité, beaucoup d’indulgence, et quelque naturelle amitié pour le beau et le bien.’¹ And, Voltairian as he is, one is tempted to forecast for him, as did M. Jérôme Coignard for Catherine, a judgment clearer sighted and better motivated than ours : ‘Anatole est ma créature, et je le reconnais aux restes d’une belle lumière qui n’est point éteinte en lui.’

Idealism such as this runs counter, it may seem, to cynicism, however genial ; but the union of the two tempers is what is most characteristic in M. Anatole France. Hence at once his charm and his truthfulness. For life is woven of no one texture : many moods, many impressions, many standpoints find their place in the varied harmony of the whole. From no one point of view can it be seen in its entirety : ‘uno itinere non potest perveniri ad tam grande secretum.’ Optimism, pessimism, idealism, realism—all are partial and relative ; each gives one aspect only of the

¹ *La Vie littéraire*, vol. i. Préface.

infinite complexity of Nature, we must combine them if we would gain an outlook, however inadequate, over Nature as a whole.

They see not clearliest who see all things clear.

Systems are fallacious ; it is only by a free employment of sophisms to conceal their deficiencies that systems are formed and impose themselves upon us. No philosophy is more than a way of looking at things, a variable formula expressing certain invariable phenomena ; no dogma, no religious conception, represents its object as it is ; the nearest the truth are but ' broken lights ' of the Infinite, and It is ' more than they.' The heart, then, rightly interrogated, has its standing in these difficult matters as well as the understanding ; it may be, indeed, that when the two conflict we do well to trust the former rather than the latter, and—as the poet bids us—

feel, that we may know.

Les vérités découvertes par l'intelligence demeurent stériles. Le cœur est seul capable de féconder les rêves. Il verse la vie dans tout ce qu'il aime. C'est par le sentiment que les semences du bien sont jetées sur le monde. La raison n'a point tant de vertu. . . . Il faut, pour servir les hommes, rejeter toute raison, comme un bagage embarrassant, et s'élever sur les ailes de l'enthousiasme. Si l'on raisonne, on ne s'envolera jamais.¹

¹ *Les Opinions de M. Jérôme Coignard*, p. 288.

VII. ÉMILE FAGUET

THE somewhat cynical saying of Ecclesiastes that there is no new thing under the sun appears, according to the point of view from which it is regarded, either a truism or an untruth : the former, if we take it to mean that there is no such thing as an absolutely new departure in experience ; the latter, if it be construed into a denial of the fact that experience is for ever presenting itself to us under new forms. Taken, however, in an intermediate sense, it contains a truth : the ideas which form the content of consciousness, though capable of entering into endless combinations, are limited in number. As from the few notes of the musical scale the composer builds up the complex harmony of the fugue or the symphony, so out of a few elementary perceptions and feelings the statesman, the poet, the philosopher construct their masterpieces, each in his respective kingdom of fact, fancy, and thought. It is not easy to resolve these, in the completed forms in which they come before us, into their elements : the original matter is disguised or transformed in the using—the brick faced with marble, the gases cooled into consistency, the separate fused into the whole. And this difficulty is greater or less according to the complexity of the structure : it is easier, for instance, to analyse American institutions than European ; the centuries of growth which lie behind the latter have left their history entangled and their origins obscure. In the case of our own country, our national character aggravates the task. Judgment rather than intelligence is the note of the English mind. We distrust ideas as such ; they must come to us in the garb of custom, or even of prejudice : it is the reason latent in unreason that commends itself to us ; precedent rather than logic is our guide. The Latin

races are differently constituted : ideas possess them ; the fallacy of logic, than which no fallacy is greater or more mischievous, besets their way. For this very reason, however, it is easier to trace the development of thought among them than among ourselves : it moves unchecked from premiss to inference and from syllogism to syllogism, ignoring the difference between pure and applied science, careless of the gulf that separates formula from fact. No English writers are so consequent, in the literal sense of the word, as Rousseau, as De Maistre, as Comte. Happily for England, we may believe ; for, from the practical point of view, our illogicalness has been our salvation : the more rigorously men reason from necessarily imperfect premisses the wider of the truth are the conclusions at which they arrive. But the logic of French thought, fallacious in itself, facilitates the inquiries of the historian of ideas : nowhere do these command such an assent, gain such a following, or stand out in such strong relief. The German mind is more profound, the English sounder, but in intelligence pure and simple the French is superior to either. It is the soil of all others in which ideas flourish. If we would watch their growth, follow their development, and inspect their content, we shall do so to the best advantage here.

Nor would it be easy to find a more competent guide than M. Faguet : he is recommended by his qualities, and not disqualified by their accompanying defects. It might, perhaps, be maintained without paradox that these constitute an additional recommendation. There are two M. Faguets indeed, an impersonal and a personal, an exponent and a controversialist : but in both the temperament which has been described as French is dominant, both are possessed by, rather than possess, ideas. Of both the criticism of M. Pellissier, '*trop cérébral pour être artiste*,'¹ holds good : M. Faguet has more intelligence than sensibility ; neither humour, nor sympathy, nor lightness of touch is his. His thinking is as nearly as possible pure brain-work ; his one aim is to render the idea to the life. Hence a certain indifference to completeness and consistency,

¹ *Le Mouvement littéraire contemporain*, p. 245.

because these qualities, as he conceives them, are incompatible with perfect accuracy of description. System—‘une idée chez ceux qui ne sont pas très capables d’en avoir plusieurs, ou une passion chez ceux qui sont incapables de penser autre chose que ce qu’ils sentent’—is too limited and too individual for his austere objective temper. A great writer, he holds—and perhaps he is himself an example of it—is not one man but many men. No one formula expresses him ; each has various formulas, one modifying the other, and in its turn modified by the rest : consistency is too dearly bought at the expense of truth. His treatment of Bossuet and Fénelon respectively is an example of this : the former had in him more of the thinker, the latter of the Churchman, than we are apt to suppose ; and M. Faguet describes without attempting to reconcile or co-ordinate the characteristics of each.¹ There is a fine detachment in this absence of preconception, this aloofness. Except in the prefaces attached to the several volumes of his works—prefaces which, at once concise and suggestive, call for and will repay scrupulously careful reading—his personal views and sympathies seldom reveal themselves, and when they appear to do so it is rather as pointing out what others have overlooked than as pressing the note of private judgment. M. Faguet is the most impersonal as he is the most intelligent of critics, reproducing rather than depicting, eliciting rather than reading in. If criticism be, as he describes it, ‘un don de vivre d’une infinité de vies étrangères, avec cette clarté de conscience que ne peut avoir que celui qui est assez fort pour se détacher et s’abstraire et regarder en étranger sa propre âme,’ he may be assigned high rank as a critic ; few have mastered the difficult art of putting themselves in the place of others so well as he. So far is this self-effacement carried that a criticism of his works resolves itself in great measure into a criticism of the writers and periods passed under review by him ; he is, as nearly as it is possible to be, a reflecting medium—a mirror of ideas. The question that occurs is, What has he seen ? And the answer is that little has escaped him : he has seen

¹ *XVII Siècle*, pp. 283, 333.

almost, if not quite, all that there is to see. So much for the impersonal M. Faguet. But, as has been said, there is a personal, contrasting with the other as Mr. Jekyll to Dr. Hyde. Possessed, as before, by an idea, but here by a perverted and preconceived idea, he lays stress on the differential in such a manner and to such an extent as to lose sight of the more vital generic content of his conceptions; he is biased, a special pleader, an out-and-out partisan. It is especially in his treatment of the eighteenth century that he comes before us in this light. Not, it must be admitted, in dealing with its leading men: his summing up of Voltaire, perhaps its most representative figure, though unfriendly, is not, taken as a whole, unjust. But his antipathy to the temper and tendencies of the period is so strong that, while too veracious to tamper with his facts, to produce or omit them arbitrarily, he exaggerates its defects and minimises its excellencies till the result is a caricature rather than a portrait. He has asserted nothing that is contrary to fact, he has left out nothing that is essential; but the whole is seen out of focus, the impression left on the reader is one-sided and untrue to life. One error in an account invalidates the whole calculation: his misconception of the age of the Encyclopædists and the Revolution results in a tendency to misconceive later problems, from which, though he struggles against it with greater success than might have been anticipated, he never wholly frees himself. 'I am not going to lay hands on my father Parmenides' is sense as well as piety; what the Eleatic teaching was to Socrates and his disciples the solvents of the Illumination are to the thinkers of our own time. Vainly would we forget the pit out of which we were taken. 'Honour thy father and thy mother' is a condition of valid thinking as well as of length of days.

We stand in an exceptionally favourable position for a review of this chapter of our spiritual history. The conventional divisions of time seldom correspond exactly with its real measurement: centuries overlap one another, because the forces that are at work in them are immaterial and escape our categories. But, allowance being made for

the want of perspective inseparable from a contemporary standpoint, it is difficult not to believe that the new century coincides roughly with a new age. Partly from religious and political enthusiasm, partly from necessity, the nineteenth century addressed itself to the work of reconstruction: the preceding century had destroyed the fabric of society; the walls of Jerusalem must be rebuilt. The attempt was unsuccessful; in some cases the reconstruction was premature, in others artificial, in all inadequate, because stereotyped. Salvation was to be found in a dogma—monarchy, the republic, the papacy—or in a system—the philosophy of Hegel, or Comte, or Aquinas. That a given number of such solutions should have been advanced would not in itself indicate a new age, for the questions which they profess to solve remain open, and further solutions similar to those already attempted might be proposed indefinitely. But we should be dull indeed had we not learned by experience that ready-made solutions of this kind are worthless, that no one formula is large enough to embrace the infinite complexity of things. Dogma, be its content what it may, is provisional and relative: it is like the stream whose waters, though flowing between the same banks, are for ever changing; nay, the permanency of whose banks is apparent only, since these too, worn by the current and acted upon by the forces of sun, rain, and frost, change. The value of systems is historical. Scholasticism, for example, is a moment in the history of thought, vitally connected with its previous and subsequent movements; but to identify it with thought in itself is to lose sight of its real significance, and misconceive the whole problem of philosophy. It is a pseudo-science which puts forward pretensions of this kind; the veil of the temple is not so easily lifted. Things are not simple; their explanations, therefore, cannot be simple. ‘Teach thy tongue to say, “I do not know,”’ said the wisest of the Rabbis: we must wait.

Our stock of ideas, it has been said, is limited. Is Virtue one? Is Virtue knowledge? What is the definition of Justice? Such questions as these, familiar to Plato and the Sophists, are discussed under a slightly altered

phraseology to-day. Of these questions that of the relation of the One to the Many is perhaps the deepest and the most far-reaching : a commonplace of Greek philosophy, a theme for the rhetoric of the orator and the declamation of the schoolboy, it underlies every political revolution, every social and economical development, every religious reform.

The One remains, the Many change and pass.

As soon as men began to reflect, the contrast between the two forced itself upon them ; as they emphasised one or other they leaned to this or that philosophical school. A Parmenides, contemplating the unity and permanence of the universe, overlooked the endless process of life into which thought resolves it—as one who, lost in wonder at the first view of the infinite expanse of ocean, should conceive it, as did the Seer of the Apocalypse, ‘ a sea of glass, like unto crystal,’ forgetting the many waters of which it is composed : a Democritus or a Leucippus, fascinated by the endless play of the atoms out of which the world, as we know it, is constructed, forgets that these have meaning and value only inasmuch as they serve and constitute an order outside and beyond themselves. How many antitheses does this original divergence of view cover !—law and liberty, the static and the dynamic element in society, socialism and individualism, orthodoxy and free thought. In the first stages of society the community is paramount ; it is more important that men should act according to law than that they should act freely or even rationally. There is a certain reason implicit in law ; and in early days the advantage to be gained by improving on this is more than counterbalanced by the discipline of submission, the subjection of the ungoverned passions of semi-civilised man to control. But as time goes on a certain amount of self-restraint becomes habit, and so second nature ; and the welfare of society demands not only the maintenance of the social tie, but, to a greater or less extent, the emancipation of the individual, self-realisation on his part over against as well as in the community, freedom to initiate, to think, and act on his own responsibility. Neither factor, the

pressure of the One or the action of the Many, can be left out of account with impunity ; but, according to circumstances, this or that is the more prominent of the two.

Mankind does not progress in a straight line, but, like a ship, tacking. On the whole, and taking a wide field of observation, there is advance ; but at a particular time or place there may be retrogression, real or apparent : ‘ observation with extensive view ’ is necessary to determine the drift of tendency and purpose in human affairs. The Middle Ages are often misjudged for want of this extended vision ; it is easy to see in them nothing but violence and darkness, the abuses of feudalism, the tyranny of the secular, and the crushing weight of the spiritual arm. That crimes of violence were rife, that pestilence and famine were more frequent, that less value was attached to human life as such than now, is true. But no picture is all shadow ; and, in particular, to regard the period as one of intellectual stagnation is a vulgar error. Scholasticism, which we are apt to identify with the systematised orthodoxy of St. Thomas, produced mystics like Erigena and critics like Ockham ; there were thinkers at Paris and Oxford as hardy and as unfettered by tradition as at Berlin and Tübingen to-day. The sense of confinement that characterised the age as a whole was due to the material limitations under which it suffered. Ideas appealed to a larger public than had been the case in the slave States of antiquity, where a high culture limited to the governing class contrasted sharply with the degradation of the proletariat, on which this rested. But a vehicle was wanting ; the mechanical means of the diffusion of knowledge fell short of the growing desire to know. The invention of printing marked the end of the old and the opening of the new era. The Sorbonne, in calling for its abolition, and coupling the demand with another for the suppression of heresy, showed a true appreciation of cause and effect. The mediæval idea was outgrown : it survived only by reason of the material conditions in which mediæval society found itself ; when these disappeared it fell to dust, like a mummy taken from a vault into the open air. The printing-press was a

circulating medium of intellectual commerce ; knowledge became current ; everywhere there was a ferment and a stir. The coincidence of this invention with the discovery and diffusion of classical manuscripts was 'opportune ; had it been discovered earlier or later its results on civilisation would have been other than they were.

Dès lors un départ très net s'établit : d'une part le livre critique et le livre du xvi^e siècle, ceux-ci imprimés, portatifs, facilement lisibles, incroyablement multipliés d'autre part le livre du moyen âge, manuscrit, peu maniable, susceptible, peu lisible, et introuvable.¹

It came at the psychological moment when the literature of Greece and Rome, over and above its intrinsic worth, had the charm of novelty, and so imposed itself to the exclusion of all other :—

L'imprimerie a à peu près supprimé le moyen âge. . . . De là pour un temps qui a été long, qui à certains égards dure encore, cette idée assez répandue que le moyen âge n'existe pas, qu'il est comme un grand vide dans l'histoire de la pensée humaine. De là ce mot si étrange et si significatif de Renaissance, désignant l'esprit antique comme esprit de vie, le seizième siècle comme résurrection, le moyen âge comme mort, mise au sépulcre et long anéantissement de la pensée humaine. Jamais peut-être, et non pas même aux commencements du christianisme, et non pas même, en France, à la fin du xviii^e siècle, l'orgueil humain ayant pour forme la réaction contre le passé et le mépris de la tradition, quitte à remplacer celle qu'on laisse par une autre, ne s'est déclaré avec une telle force et un pareil enivrement.²

Hence an immense sense of liberation ; it was as if the prison doors had been opened and the captive set free. M. Faguet remarks justly that the Renaissance, like humanism and the Reformation, was a return to the past ; but it was to a past which was conceived as the golden age of humanity : men had lived in a cloister since it had been left behind them ; now they came out into the light and air and picked up the thread of life where it had been dropped. The *joie de vivre* pervaded existence ; the

¹ *Seizième Siècle*, p. x.

² *Ibid.*

sun rose again over the horizon, the lurid mists with the shapes of darkness that peopled them fled before the advancing day. The imitation of ancient models, which subsequently became a conventionalism, was at first a spontaneous reaction against the archaic stiffness and constraint of mediæval standards. The 'Voti Solutio' of Joachim du Bellay has all the freshness and charm of Catullus—

Jam mihi mea reddita est Columba ;
 Vos tristes elegi, valete longum :
 At vos molliculi vénite versus,
 Dum cano reditum meæ Columbæ.
 Quam plus oculis meis amabam,
 Cujus basia blandulumque murmur,
 Lusus, nequitia proterviores,
 Et morsus poterant micante rostro,
 Ipsum vincere passerem Catulli.
 Nam mellita fuit, venusta, bella,
 Pulchra, candidula, atque delicata
 Nil mage ut queat esse delicatum
 Mellitum magis aut magis venustum.
 At vos hendecasyllabi frequentes,
 Versus molliculi venustulique,
 Adeste huc precor, et quot estis omnes
 Formosæ Veneri bonisque divis
 Votum solvite pro meâ Columbâ—

while Marot developed the capacity of the vernacular as the vehicle of a subtler sentiment than that of antiquity :—

Puisque de vous je n'ai autre visage,
 Je m'en vais rendre hermite en un désert,
 Pour prier Dieu, si un autre vous sert,
 Qu'autant que moi en votre honneur soit sage.

Adieu amours, adieu gentil corsage,
 Adieu ce teint, adieu ces friands yeux !
 Je n'ai pas eu de vous grand avantage ;
 Un moins amant aura peut-être mieux.

The philosophy of the movement is seen at its best in Montaigne. Inquisitive rather than enthusiastic, averse to dogmatism, orthodox or otherwise, penetrated by the sense of relativity, without illusions, something of a fatalist,

the strong common sense which, while deficient, it may seem to a foreigner, in the French as a nation, is, curiously enough, characteristic of individual Frenchmen, runs through him; his element is the mean. The temper of the Renaissance, indeed, was in no sense revolutionary. It emancipated the individual from the iron pressure of his environment, but neither in the Church nor in the commonwealth did it lean to extreme courses. In the latter, indeed, its tendency was to strengthen central at the expense of local authority; one ruler, it was thought, was more likely to be amenable to reason than many, and unity of government was a source of strength to the State. Nor in religion was there any wish to break away from the established order; bowing in the house of Rimmon was tolerated perhaps to excess. The attitude of such men as Erasmus or Montaigne to the Church differed little from that of the more moderate school of Catholics to-day. Stress was laid rather on the rational than on the miraculous in religion; there was a desire to reform abuses, to return to evangelical standards, to fall back from historical Christianity on the teaching and Person of Christ. But all this was within the limits of Catholicism: strange as it may appear, the antagonism between the Renaissance and the Reformation was marked. For Protestantism did not spring panoplied into existence, as did Athene from the head of Zeus¹: it was as dogmatic in its original form as Catholicism, and its doctrines were narrower; as tyrannical, and its tyranny, being new, threatened to be more oppressive than the old. The aim of Calvin was to establish a theocracy of which the preachers were to be the governing body; had it been successful, the little finger of King Stork at Geneva would have been thicker than the loins of King Log at Rome. Individualism in religion—witness the Anabaptists in Germany and the harmless Quakers in England and America—was repressed as ruthlessly by Protestant as by Papist; to tolerate error, it was believed, was to betray truth. That the Reformation bore religious liberty in its womb is true; but it had not strength to bring forth its

¹ Cf. Ritschl, *Geschichte des Pietismus*, pp. ii. 88.

offspring : it developed its fundamental ideas—and their importance cannot be overestimated—within the limits of the text of Scripture interpreted by the necessarily inadequate exegesis of the time. Hence, as its name implies, the movement aimed rather at the correction of abuses than at an enlargement of the spiritual horizon. Of Calvin M. Faguet says with truth, ‘il a l’esprit théologique et un cœur qui n’a pas le goût du divin’;¹ the orthodoxy of Wittenberg became in the second generation as lifeless as that of Trent. For the time being liberty and learning suffered ; a controverted text of St. Paul, misunderstood by both disputants, was of more account than a dialogue of Plato ; petty questions of Church organisation outweighed the larger and more lasting interests of mind. Nor was this loss to intelligence compensated by gain to religion, which does not flourish most when most in evidence : piety is a tender plant, and loves the shade. It is probable that those are most truly religious who are so unconsciously : introspection, material or spiritual, is a morbid symptom ; it is unhealthy to be for ever thinking about one’s health. The treachery and bloodshed which characterise the religious conflicts of the sixteenth century are doubtful proofs of religion ; it is possible to make the Gospel of less account than party—to be a sectary, Protestant or Catholic, without being a follower of Christ. What is vital in religion is that which good men hold in common, not that which separates them from one another ; to lay stress on the latter is to take husks for corn.

The temper of the seventeenth century differed from that of the sixteenth. Weary of the theological labyrinth in which they had lost themselves, men turned from religious controversy to the more useful task of self-improvement, and set to work to make the best of the elements of well-being which they found to hand. Nor were these inconsiderable : learning, taste, and refinement flourished ; in Corneille, Racine, and Molière the drama reached its climax ; in Descartes modern philosophy began. With lower aims, the success of the age was greater ; if it did not reform the

¹ *Seizième Siècle*, p. 195.

Church or solve the riddles of the world, at least it did not deafen the one with discordant clamour or deluge the other with blood. With the notable exception of Pascal, which admits of a pathological explanation, the representative men of the time were not greatly troubled about their souls. Of the two great prelates of the age Bossuet was a Churchman rather than a religionist—'un conseiller d'État,' Rémusat describes him; 'homme de gouvernement de la tête aux pieds.' Fénelon, indeed, with all his reputed gentleness, was as intolerant of independent thinking in religion as his great rival; he was the scourge of the Jansenists, and when engaged in the 'conversion' of Protestants in Aunis and Saintonge did not scruple to call in a regiment of dragoons to co-operate in the pious work. But the orthodoxy which it was sought to enforce by these rough methods was political rather than religious; the mind of the age was set on other than religious things. It was the Augustan period—courtly, dignified, classical in the sense in which classicism is native to French literature: movements, Parnassian, naturalist, symbolic, and the rest, come and go; this remains.

Les Français sont très sensibles à cet ascendant. . . . Ce culte fait partie de notre patrimoine classique. Il est parmi nos *sacra*. Notre xvi^e siècle l'a mis en honneur, notre xvii^e siècle l'a soutenu. Au commencement du xviii^e on en perdait le sens; mais vers la fin il revivait avec une force singulière, avait son contrecoup, et ridicule et terrible aussi, sur les mœurs et sur l'histoire.¹

The One, to go back to our formula, was more prominent in it than the Many. Bossuet deliberately renounced excellence in other departments in the higher interests, as he believed them, of unity. 'Aisément il eût pu être un Pascal, un la Rochefoucauld, un Leibnitz, un Montesquieu. Une préuve, c'est qu'il a été tour à tour l'un ou l'autre, chemin faisant, et sans vouloir s'y tenir.'² Some allowance must be made for national sentiment; it is difficult for a Frenchman to look at the Eagle of Meaux quite dispassionately; but the criticism is substantially just. If Bossuet distrusted ideas in others—in Richard Simon, for instance—

¹ *Dix-huitième Siècle*, p. 147.

² *Dix-septième Siècle*, p. 287.

his distrust was based not on the hatred that dull men bear to intelligence, but on considerations of public policy : if he kept the understanding of others in subjection, at least he dealt the same measure to his own. Burning questions, however, are not extinguished by being shelved ; the problems of the preceding age had fallen into the background mainly because at the time they concerned a class rather than the community as a whole. Under changed circumstances and in another setting they were bound to recur. These circumstances and this setting were provided by the eighteenth century : the century which produced Voltaire and Rousseau, and ended in the explosion of '93.

M. Faguet is no admirer of the eighteenth century. ' Ni chrétien ni français ' is his judgment on it : it saw the extinction of the religious and the weakening of the patriotic idea. That of the former he assigns mainly to the growth of the scientific spirit, that of the latter to the cessation of anything like political life in France. Each of these causes, no doubt, acted in the direction indicated. The progress of physical science tended to direct attention to facts rather than theories, and to subordinate the supposed interests of the other world to the more tangible concerns of this ; it developed the sense of evidence, and indisposed men to take assertion for proof. The highly centralised government of Louis XIV, concentrating as it did the power of the State in the hands of the Crown, and excluding the citizens as such from the conduct of affairs, was fatal to anything like public spirit ; men's energies were diverted into other channels and directed to other ends. But a larger view may be taken. It is possible to question the value both of the religion and the patriotism to which the eighteenth century was fatal ; to believe that the removal of the outworn husk was in each case the condition of the liberation of the genuine content of the notion ; that it was imperative that the love of God and country should appear under new forms. Patriotism—and the same holds good of the loftiest human passions—is an ideal sentiment, founded on a material basis, the good of the commonwealth ; when this is cut away it falls for want of support. And the absolutism of the time

had lost sight of the good of the commonwealth. Dynastic had taken the place of national considerations : wars were undertaken for no public advantage, but to gratify the ambition of a sovereign ; battles were fought that a king's mistress might witness a combat, cities sacked to silence the complaints of soldiers clamouring for their pay. All this was foreign to the best traditions of the past. The French monarchy, though absolute, was not, till the reign of Louis XIV, despotic : there was a fixed, though unwritten, constitution ; there were local representative bodies—*Conseils généraux et régionaux*—charged with administrative and executive functions, and possessing powers of taxation ; there were independent municipalities, tribunals, parliaments, and, last of all, the States-General, representing the nation as a whole. These institutions had practically disappeared, not by process of law, but by desuetude. Far-sighted men like Fénelon urged their revival, as a means of infusing new blood into the body politic ; Montesquieu, in a striking passage, pointed out the unintelligence inseparable from despotic government : ‘ l'extrême obéissance suppose de l'ignorance dans celui qui obéit ; elle en suppose même chez celui qui commande. Il n'a point à raisonner ; il n'a que vouloir.’ But thinkers were few ; the influence of the court and the indifference of the natural leaders of the people were too strong for them : their words fell on deaf ears.

It was not so much that the eighteenth century destroyed patriotism, as M. Faguet would have it, as that patriotism had ceased to be a virtue. The implicit sentiment of the Middle Ages was no longer possible : it had to pass over into the explicit and conscious stage as a condition of survival ; and this was impossible under existing circumstances. The world had come to years of discretion—not suddenly, indeed ; the process had been long and slow ; but, as is usual in such cases, its recognition of its maturity was, or seemed, sudden. The question *Why ?* had to be faced at every turn ; where it could not be answered, or was answered unsatisfactorily, assent and obedience were withheld. It was not till the armies of the Directory drove

back the tide of invasion from French soil, and, flushed with enthusiasm and success, overran Europe, rousing the nations to fight not for throne and altar only, but for the very existence of the national idea, that the Why of patriotism was answered, and patriotism in the modern sense of the word born. So with religion : it had ceased to be religious ; its sufficient reason was gone. An eminent Catholic writer has attempted to account for the Reformation by the Church's virtues : men were weary of her beneficence, her prayer, her sacraments, her hands lifted to bless.¹ This is rhetoric, not history. A religion perishes not of its virtues, but of its vices : had Catholicism been such as and no more than its apologists describe it, Europe would have been Catholic to-day. And what is true of the sixteenth century is true also of the eighteenth. It was the misfortune of the Church that, owing to perhaps inevitable circumstances—the survival of the mediæval union between Church and State, the conservatism of human nature (especially ecclesiastical human nature), and those personal and class interests from whose bias even clergymen are not exempt—she was associated, not to say identified, with the worst and most oppressive features of the old regime. The often-quoted ‘*Écrasez l'infâme*’ was a cry of hatred, not of Christianity as such, still less of its Founder, but of the burden of spiritual and material terrorism, which lay on men like an incubus, crushing out freedom and life. Orthodoxy had become a matter of police regulation, unintelligently framed and brutally administered : the Calas case—which cannot be too often retold, for the history has repeated itself *mutatis mutandis* in our own time—accounts for and justifies the light in which it was regarded by right-minded men. It would have been desirable, no doubt—greatly desirable—that this state of things should have been reformed from within. But if there is one thing which history can be relied on to show, it is this : that no sincere reformation of religion or of religious societies can be looked for from within. Partial reforms have been, and may again be, attempted ; the secular clergy has endeavoured to reform the religious, and the religious

¹ J. H. Newman, *Occasional Sermons*, p. 171.

the secular, the Pope the bishops, a Council the Pope. But the indifferent success of these attempts has furnished a plausible excuse for their discontinuance: the sufficient reason of Ultramontanism is the proof afforded by the Councils of Basle and Constance that the tyranny of many is more intolerable than that of one. The permanent dictatorship of Rome was accepted by the Church as the lesser of two evils; but it brought with it, as a consequence, the petrification of religion, the overweighting of the kernel by the shell. The Catholic reaction which followed the Reformation accentuated those tendencies: the Papacy became the tool of that Spanish-Austrian absolutism, which has been a curse wherever its blighting shadow has fallen.¹ Where would Europe have stood to-day, what would have been the fate of learning, of liberty, of religion even, had the Inquisition and the 'Index' had their way unchecked? The increase of intellectual and spiritual freedom which the various Churches enjoy has been purchased for them by heretics: Luther has deserved better of Catholicism than Philip II or Alva, Voltaire than De Maistre or Veuillot. The negative movement of the eighteenth century, irreligious itself, worked for religion: it let in light and air, it drove out those who bought and sold in the sanctuary, it cleansed the shrine.

It is with greater justice that the reproach of inconsideration is brought against the period:—

Il était tout neuf, tout primitif et comme tout brut. La tradition est l'expérience d'un peuple; il manquait de tradition, et n'en voulait point. Aussi, et c'est en cela qu'il est d'un si grand intérêt, c'est un siècle enfant, ou, si l'on veut, adolescent. Il a de cet âge la fougue, l'ardeur indiscrète, la curiosité, la malice, l'intempérance, le verbiage, la présomption, l'étourderie, le manque de gravité et de tenue, les polissonneries, et aussi une certaine générosité, bonté de cœur, facilité aux larmes, besoin de s'attendrir, et enfin cet optimisme instinctif qui sent toujours le bonheur tout proche, se croit toujours tout près de le saisir, et en a perpétuellement le besoin, la certitude et l'impatience.²

¹ Cf. Cavour, *von F. X. Kraus*, c. 1.

² *Dix-huitième Siècle*, p. xii.

The criticism amounts to this : that in its generous ardour for reform it attempted the impossible—a break with the past, and a new departure independent of it ; hence Taine's criticism that the Revolution neither destroyed nor created despotism, but gave it a new form. Sincerely and enthusiastically philanthropic, it underrated the complexity of social problems and of economic facts. A twofold source of error was opened in consequence : forgetting that with all its faults the *ancien régime* was the historical form which the national life had taken, the reformers discarded not only its abuses but the elements of permanent value which it contained ; forgetting that ideas can only be applied to concrete facts when allowance has been made for the difference between the actual and the abstract, they relied on *à priori* reasonings, overlooking the realities with which they had to deal. Such errors revenge themselves. But it may be questioned whether it is possible to avoid them except at the price of stagnation, whether they are not the condition under which progress is brought about. The inertia of men in general is such that they are not moved without a disproportionate expenditure of force ; for a generation to free itself from the burden of ages dead and gone a certain self-complacency and limitation of view, together with an incapacity to understand the past and its own dependence on it, are required.¹ Our no doubt superior wisdom has been dearly—some may think too dearly—bought. We live in an age of half-beliefs and half-scepticisms ; we see so many reasons for and against each alternative that we cannot decide for either, but oscillate between the two. To say 'I do not know' is one thing ; to acquiesce in ignorance where vital interests of the individual or the community are at stake is quite another. This state of mind is inconsistent not only with action—and one part is to act—but with intellectual sincerity. Knowledge, if speculative and no more, is a doubtful good ; it is only as leading to truth and directing conduct that it has significance and worth. If the malady of thought has chilled the blood in our veins, if a nerveless agnosticism has emptied philosophy of its content

¹ Cf. Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, i. 29.

and paralysed energy and will, we may look back with regret to the robust thinkers of the Illumination with their strong sense, their hopefulness, their vitality, their vigorous affirmations and denials. Their yes was yes, and their no no. They denounced a lie as a lie; we satisfy ourselves with the jesting 'What is truth?' of Pilate: they were confident that there was no evil without a remedy; we half suspect that there is no remedy for any evil: they disbelieved, or thought they disbelieved, in God, but believed in goodness; we disbelieve in goodness, but believe, or think we believe, in God. 'Pecca fortiter,' said a theologian; their vices and their virtues were those of men.

'Le xviii^e siècle, au regard de la postérité, s'obscurcira, s'offusquera, et semblera peu à peu s'amincir entre les deux grands siècles dont il est précédé et suivi.' From the literary standpoint this is so. It was neither profound nor creative; it lived on the surface of things, and was satisfied to reproduce. The shepherdesses of Watteau are representative:—

Il fut franchement traditionnel. . . . Mais c'était la tradition prise par son petit côté. Pour être dans la grande tradition et dans le vrai classique il ne s'agissait pas de les imiter, il s'agissait de faire comme eux; il s'agissait de comprendre l'antique et de s'en inspirer librement; et au lieu de remonter à la première source, imiter ceux qui déjà empruntent, c'est risquer de faire des imitations d'imitations. . . . Le grand art du xviii^e siècle est une manière de mandarinat très lettré, très circonspect, très digne et très impuissant.¹

The fact was that there was a great deal to be done on the surface of things; the age was too busy for reflection or artistic effort. It was practical, perhaps rather Philistine, and had little eye for effects of light and shade.

M. Faguet is on more questionable ground when he tells us that its conquests have been turned against it, that the sciences which it called into being have been fatal to the ideas by which it laid store. That the ideas of the eighteenth century have been revised is true. Politics are no longer regarded as an abstract science, but as a science of observa-

¹ *Dix-huitième Siècle*, p. xxiii.

tion and experience ; history has exhibited the unity of national, biology and its kindred sciences that of individual life. We no longer reason from the social contract ; we have ceased to accept the figment of equality ; the doctrine of heredity and natural selection have rehabilitated what had been too indiscriminately set down as the prejudices of aristocracy and race. In pressing this M. Faguet makes the same point that is made by a Catholic controversialist who exhibits the divergence between the opinions of the Reformers and those of modern Protestants. Literally accurate, the criticism is in fact sophistical. The ideas of the eighteenth century have not been modified in the direction of tradition ; the most that their modification justifies us in asserting is that, like those of the Reformation, they were not born full-grown. Had they been so they would have been short-lived ; to live is to change. A new idea is often for the time being an *idée fixe*, and its propaganda a religion falling little short of the older cults in fanaticism and one-sidedness. It was so with Evolution, it was so with the Hegelian philosophy. Neither of these fulfilled the expectations of the first generation of disciples ; there is a residuum of the universe which escapes the meshes of the most skilfully framed formula : but each raised the fabric of knowledge higher, and contributed a layer on which later comers build. So with the ideas of the eighteenth century. Their content is to be distinguished from their form ; this was of the time and passed with it, that is lasting and remains. The achievement of the age was the assertion of the individual against the community which, defeating its own end, crushed him ; over against the Sovereign he became a freeman, over against the State a citizen, over against the Church a Christian. And this ground, once gained, was gained for good and all. Later thinkers have shown that the community is as necessary to the individual as the individual to the community, that the citizen realises himself only in relation to the State, the Christian to the Church. But other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid ; the Christian religion is not more surely built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets than modern

society, develop itself as it may in future, on the Rights of Man. This is matter of fact, not of opinion : De Maistre knew as clearly as Napoleon that France could not be governed after the Revolution as she was before. Discussing with the future Louis XVIII the terms of a proposed manifesto to the nation, 'If we forget that we are living in 1804,' he said, 'the thing will be a failure ; the almanack is the most useful book to refer to before we begin.' 'On dirait un *libéral*,' is M. Faguet's pertinent comment, 'c'est simplement un homme qui sait ce que c'est un gouvernement.'¹

The immediate work of the nineteenth century was one of reconstruction ; the new wine had burst the old bottles.

En effet, ce qui a disparu au xviii^e siècle dans l'ordre moral, ce sont deux sentiments, le sens du surnaturel et le sens de la tradition ; et par suite un grand fait : la religion chrétienne, même réduite par le protestantisme à une sorte de minimum.²

It would be truer to say that what had disappeared was the dominion of custom, the taking beliefs and institutions for granted and on authority. The human mind had made an immense stride in the direction of self-consciousness ; it not only lived, but knew that it lived. The temporary displacement of ideas inseparable from a sudden enlargement of the horizon is not to be confounded with the permanent loss of their content. No element of worth in the past was lost, but the past as a whole was re-stated ; what was valuable in it was preserved in new combinations and under new forms. It was inevitable that the first criticism of this advance movement should be hostile, but from this criticism it had everything to gain. It is no advantage to ideas to remain unsifted, the dross encumbering the pure metal, the tares bound in the same bundle with the corn. The atmosphere in which they flourish best is one of criticism : it discriminates, separates content from form, and facilitates development ; the most mischievous form of infidelity is the disbelief in the power of truth to hold its own. Of those hostile critics its ablest and

¹ *Politiques et Moralistes*, i. 4.

² *Ibid.*, vii.

the most uncompromising was De Maistre. It was easy for him to expose the fallacies which underlay not a few of the positions of his opponents—representative government, the law of majorities, equality. Such things are like the dry bones in the valley of vision : it is only when the breath of life has come into them that they possess moral worth. As machinery they are as dead as all machinery in itself must be : the soul of a people is not in them. He did not see that his criticism applied to the machinery on which he insisted—monarchy, aristocracy, the Papacy—no less than to that which he denounced. As machinery each is lifeless ; either, if informed by spiritual life, may be effective. The question is, Which, under given circumstances, is the most suitable vehicle of this life ? De Maistre's sense of duty was lofty. If he insisted on the rights of kings and nobles, he insisted even more on their duties ; if he would have nothing done by, he would have everything done for the people. An intelligent despotism was his ideal form of government. Unfortunately for his theory history shows us no example of this. An intelligent despot is possible—a Frederick the Great or a Joseph II : Europe produces one once, perhaps, in a term of centuries. But an intelligent despotism is a contradiction ; the conditions that make for despotism are inconsistent in the long run with intelligence either in the ruler or the ruled. So with religion. ' Quand on lit de Maistre on a toujours l'idée d'un catholique qui n'est pas chrétien.'¹ The paradox strikes M. Faguet, as it struck Scherer and Sainte-Beuve.

Figurez-vous un patricien romain du v^e siècle qui n'a rien compris à Jésus, mais que les circonstances ont fait chrétien, sans changer le fond de sa nature ni le tour de ses idées, qui apprend que l'empire est détruit, qu'il n'y a plus dans le monde que des souverainetés partielles et locales, qui dans le trouble où le jette un tel désordre s'écrie : ' Il reste l'évêque de Rome pour représenter et pour refaire l'unité du monde ! ' et aux yeux de qui le christianisme n'est pas autre chose ; vous ne serez pas très éloigné d'avoir une idée assez nette de la pensée de Joseph de Maistre ; et c'est

¹ *Politiques et Moralistes*, i. 249.

son originalité infiniment curieuse d'avoir l'esprit ainsi fait au commencement du xix^e siècle. Il est quelque chose comme un prétorien du Vatican.¹

He touches only the outside, the element in religion which is not religious. It is not surprising that he should have been rated so high by Comte. Both were political philosophers ; both emphasised organisation, the latter borrowing that of Catholicism for his Religion of Humanity ; both in their zeal for society overlooked the ends for which society exists. The kingdom of God is within you : the words rise up in judgment against a merely external conception either of Church or State. The outward exists for the sake of the inward, matter for spirit, the society for the man. To reverse this order is the besetting sin of strong governments. That De Maistre is the founder of modern Ultramontanism is not unconnected with the fact that Ultramontanism has become rather a political than a religious party, sectarian in its temper and secular in its aims.

The stream of individualism let loose by the breaking down of the barriers that had hitherto restrained it parted into two divergent currents—that of liberty and that of democracy. Liberty gives free play to each man's powers, and so gives rise to superiority and privilege : the strong become stronger and the rich richer ; the inequalities which had been so galling are restored. And this in an aggravated form. The impersonal capitalist is a harder master than the territorial landlord or small employer of labour. A joint-stock company has neither heart nor conscience ; the system works mechanically, crushing whatever stands in its way. The gigantic Trusts are an example of this. Mr. Norris, in the 'Octopus,' has shown them to us in operation. In the remarkable study 'Que sera le XX^e Siècle ?' M. Faguet discusses the tendencies of modern industrialism which they represent. Free competition was a reform, and here are the results of the reform : 'Il est étonnant—non, ce n'est pas étonnant—il est remarquable à quel point les plus belles réformes de

¹ *Politiques et Moralistes*, i. 61.

l'humanité aboutissent à mettre une injustice à la place d'une autre.'¹ Democracy, on the other hand, is above all things jealous of privilege. One man is as good as another. It levels, or tends to level, capacities, efforts, results. And, as liberty unchecked is fatal to democracy, so democracy unchecked is fatal to liberty: 'à l'aboutissement de leur marche et à leur excès, l'un briserait l'État, l'autre établirait le pur despotisme.'² The Liberals of the first half of the century—men of the doctrinaire type of Royer-Collard and Guizot—made use of liberty as a weapon against democracy, the danger of which was fresh in the memory of their generation. The so-called Manchester school in this country worked, unconsciously, on the same lines. Production meant more to it than producers, markets than men. A fair field and no favour was the formula with which it thought to solve social and economic problems—an inadequate formula, because, men being unequal, the field is never fair. Except in England the success of this Liberalism was small. Liberty, in the sense in which it conceived liberty, appealed to few; only the strong could use it. Equality and the sense of political power appealed to many: the current of democracy gained on that of liberalism and bid fair to absorb it. There was something, indeed, at once hard and narrow in the gospel of competition: when an open market was put forward as an ideal, men felt that they had asked for bread and been given a stone. Hence the more or less fantastic schemes for calling a new spiritual power into existence associated with the names of Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Comte. The conception of a manufactured spiritual power is self-contradictory: religions are not made, they grow. The modern religious founder is met by the same difficulty which stands in the way of the American millionaire who desires to reproduce an Oxford lawn in the grounds of his Chicago palace: both have overlooked a vital factor—time. Positivism as a philosophy is significant; Positivism as a religion ranks with Spiritualism or Christian Science—a folly for which life is at once too serious and too short.

¹ *Questions politiques*, p. 322.

² *Ibid.*

One institution was left standing from the ruin of the Old World which had before now proved a source of new moral life and energy—the Roman Church; and to her the eyes of many turned. Of the distinguished men who looked for help in this direction Lamennais was the most eminent, nor does his subsequent change of standpoint detract from his significance. The provincialism of the Gallican Church of the Restoration repelled him: he looked beyond the Alps and saw, or thought he saw, a larger theology, a more ambitious policy, a stronger life. When he came to closer quarters with the Curia he was disillusioned. ‘It is these unfortunate politics that are everywhere destroying religion,’ he wrote from Rome. ‘Imagine to yourselves an aged Pope . . . surrounded by men to whom religion is as indifferent as it is to the Cabinets of Europe—avaricious, blind, and infatuated as the eunuchs of the Lower Empire: such are the men who have everything in their hands.’ This was, perhaps, a rhetorical way of expressing the fact that the standpoint of these dignitaries was not his. He was a genius, they were officials; he anticipated the facts of to-morrow, they had not yet woken to those of to-day.

Avec une clairvoyance assez remarquable il avait très bien vu ce que beaucoup ne voyaient point, à savoir que les catholiques en France devenaient une minorité. . . . Quand on devient minorité on a besoin de la liberté. Cela est si instinctif que toutes les oppositions sont libérales, et toutes les majorités autoritaires. Les catholiques seront forcés de se réclamer de la liberté, seront forcés d’être libéraux dans dix ans. Qu’ils le soient—et c’est ici le trait de génie de Lamennais—qu’ils le soient tout de suite, alors qu’ils ont encore l’air d’être la majorité, alors que leur libéralisme aura un caractère de dignité, de noblesse et de générosité, et ne paraîtra pas être un expédient de la défaite.¹

The idea of liberty is not only Christian but distinctive of Christianity. The religions of the ancient world were political and local; the common element in them, on which philosophy attempted to build a working system of belief and conduct, appealed only to philosophers: Christianity

¹ *Politiques et Moralistes*, ii. 110.

first dealt with men as individuals, with individual relations, rights, and responsibilities, to be asserted against all comers and at all costs. M. Faguet restricts this liberty to the Christian, as a member of the Christian community.¹ This is to begin Church history in the third century, instead of the first. The Christian community of the first days was not a Church but a brotherhood, loosely organised, undogmatic, governed not by fixed laws but by the spirit speaking through spiritual men. A hierarchy, an elaborate ritual, fixed creeds, and in general all that falls under the head of ecclesiasticism, mark a comparatively late stage of its development: 'freedom from symbols and articles is abstractedly the highest stage of Christian communion and the peculiar privilege of the primitive Church. . . . Technicality and formalism are, in their degree, inevitable results of public confessions of faith.'² This state of things, however, lay sixteen centuries back: Catholicism had become stereotyped; the policy of Lamennais was diametrically opposed not indeed to any dogma, but—what was, perhaps, even more important—to the spirit of the Church. The long possession of material power, the practical necessities of government, the consciousness of forming part of the established order of things had reduced the Christian idea, originally fluid and in solution, to a state of solidity: its freedom and elasticity were gone. Authoritative herself, the Church had acquired the habit of identifying herself with authority; she had become a centre to which authoritative temperaments rallied, a starting-point from which they worked. This is as true to-day as it was in 1830; the significance of the recent movement towards Catholicism on the part of not a few eminent French writers lies in the fact that it seems to have been brought about by neither religious nor moral motives, but by fear of certain disintegrating social forces. It rests not on love, but on hatred; and its fruits are not those of the Spirit: it appeals to and elicits the worst side of human nature. The Liberal Catholicism of Lamennais was

¹ *Politiques et Moralistes*, ii. 97.

² J. H. Newman, *The Arians of the Fourth Century*, p. 36.

not strong enough to make head against this stream of tendency: it was shattered against the *Mirari vos* of Gregory XVI, as the historical school of Döllinger was shattered against the Vatican Definition of 1870. But ideas remain, though their representatives disappear.

With the proclamation of the dogma of infallibility, [says a Protestant historian] Catholicism reached the highest point of its development. The principle of authority can go no further. Once this extreme height has been attained a reaction must necessarily follow; and the force which will bring about this movement is just this undue extension of the principle of authority. We have seen the waters of Ultramontanism rise in the course of this century. They have not been from all eternity; they are but of yesterday. In the 'fifties they first grew greater and greater. As they came so will they go.¹

The thinkers of the last half of the nineteenth century aimed lower than their predecessors: their outlook over the future was more confused, their self-confidence smaller, their sense of limitation greater. The temper of this Review,² for example, in its early days was the reverse of Laodicean; its trumpet gave no uncertain sound. There were definite reforms to be carried out, and definite grievances to be remedied: the Whigs of 1832 knew what they wanted, and fought with entire conviction for their ends. Step by step they were attained, but the causes of discontent were moved rather than uprooted; the old problem of the One as opposed to the Many, and the Many as opposed to the One, was with us still. The Middle Liberalism, therefore, was less sure of itself than the Early: as the vastness of the field of knowledge became apparent, specialising was seen to be a necessity; the age of systems, of bird's-eye views of the universe, had been left behind. A disposition to distrust abstract thought showed itself: the temper of the time was critical rather than creative, historical rather than metaphysical; it accumulated materials for reconstruction rather than reconstructed; hence a seeming ineffectualness, an

¹ Sohm, *Kirchengeschichte im Grundriss*, p. 239.

² The *Edinburgh Review*.

absence of positive results. The effect was, perhaps, a certain remoteness from actual life. A wide field of vision is good, and this involves haze on the horizon. But life is not all horizon: the foreground, the stage on which the action of the piece takes place, must be clear. The temper of the new century is at once more definite and more bent on action; and in these tendencies, perhaps, lies its danger. It is well to be definite if you know, but mischievous if you do not know: certainty is better than suspense of judgment, but only provided that sufficient motives for certainty are at hand. 'Incidit in Scyllam qui vult vitare Charybdim': every generation reacts against the preceding, and this reaction is apt to go too far. There is among us a certain impatience of doubt, a disposition to rush to conclusions, to try experiments in difficult and delicate subject-matter, to act for the sake of acting rather than of acting prudently and well. But if criticism without construction means anarchy, construction without criticism means building on sand. The Imperial idea, for example, which has come—and rightly—to mean so much to us, needs pruning, if very ugly parasites are not to attach themselves to it: the need of religion, however urgent, must not throw us back into mediæval superstition, or, what is perhaps a greater danger, a spiritualism in which the clear outlines of truth and falsehood are blurred in a metaphysical mist. 'A most crude recrudescence of Neopanteism has grown up in the last ten years in a manner singularly inconsistent with the bright and clear teaching of realities, and faith in realities, with which the century commenced,' a distinguished scientist warns us:¹ nor is M. Faguet without fear of the possible consequences of a religious, or at least an ecclesiastical, revival.

Je ne serais pas étonné du tout qu'il y eût au xx^e siècle une France catholique très vigoureuse; et que Dieu nous en préserve, car elle ne serait pas tendre pour la minorité protestante et libre-penseuse. Et je ne serais pas étonné—car ce n'est pas toujours la majorité numérique qui gouverne—qu'il y eût au xx^e siècle une France protestante très

¹ Lord Kelvin, British Association, 1901.

énergique ; et que Dieu nous en garde pour la même raison que tout à l'heure en sens inverse.¹

Here as throughout the One *and* the Many is the formula : law and liberty, the individual and the community, the whole and the parts—neither can be left out of account, or merged in the other ; for the interests of both are, in the last resort, the same.

If knowledge is not itself foreknowledge, it is a step towards it ; to know the past and the present is to know the future as an effect in its cause. In ' *Que sera le XX^e Siècle ?* ' M. Faguet, remembering the limitations to which the prophet is subject, and the part played by the unexpected in human affairs, considers coming events in so far as they can be discerned in the shadows they cast before them. Starting from three great facts of the present—democracy, the tendency to the formation of large States, and plutocracy—he deduces the probable characteristics of the future : from the first its conservatism, its pacific temper, its jealousy of anything like superiority or excellence ; from the second the decline of patriotism or national sentiment ; from the third the vast and increasing power of the financier :—

Leroi du marché universel, et, à très peu près, le roi du monde moderne. Il n'est pas vrai encore, il le sera demain, que, sous tous les gouvernements officiels de la planète, il y a des gouvernements occultes qui dirigent tout sans paraître et qui élaborent la vie politique sans qu'il semble qu'ils s'y mêlent. Il ne sera pas vrai demain, mais il le sera après-demain peut-être, que sous tous les gouvernements officiels de la planète il y a *un seul gouvernement* qui mène le monde et qui tient, sans montrer ses doigts, tous les rouages, tous les leviers d'aiguilleur, tous les fils et toutes les ficelles.²

It is against this government, impersonal, mechanical, unhuman, that socialism is a revolt ; a revolt destined to failure, because the force against it protests so passionately, so blindly, is in the nature of things. The economic causes which have brought about our industrial civilisation are inevitable ; they partake of that necessity against which

¹ *Politiques et Moralistes*, iii. xv.

² *Questions politiques*, p. 261.

even the gods fight in vain. Overgrown democratic States with a tendency to pass over into military despotisms ; the disappearance of small nationalities ; a plutocracy fiercely but fruitlessly attacked from time to time by the proletariat ; governments with socialist leanings restrained by the pressure of the anti-socialistic mass of the electorate ; the all but complete disappearance of the old aristocracies, of religion, of morality even in so far as this is based on religion—marriage, the family, the subordination of women ; the dying out of the higher forms of literature and art ; an immense growth and popularisation of science—these, more or less, are the outlines which the coming age will fill in. The picture is not very attractive ; but if it fails to meet our anticipations is it not possible that these have been exaggerated, and that we must resign ourselves to their non-fulfilment ?

On voudrait toujours que ce qu'a eu de bon l'humanité fût acquis et se conservât, en même temps qu'elle fait de nouvelles conquêtes. Il est probable que c'est impossible. Il est probable que ce que gagne l'humanité est compensé par ce qu'elle perd et que, depuis très longtemps, le vrai progrès n'existe plus. Il est probable que l'immense progrès matériel réalisé depuis cent cinquante ans est la rançon d'une décadence religieuse, morale et artistique qui me paraît indéniable, et qu'on ne peut nier que parce qu'elle n'est pas encore accomplie, mais qui est en train de s'accomplir et qui sera éclatante demain.¹

The pessimism of this outlook is, we believe, unwarranted. It might be controverted piece by piece. The progress of democracy, for example, has not, so far, been hostile to higher education ; such opposition as this has met with has come from other quarters : nor does patriotism show signs of diminution under popular government ; the government of this country is probably the most popular in Europe, but our national sentiment is indisputable : ' les Anglais, comme de nature, sont, non point par crises, mais d'une façon égale, le peuple le plus patriote de l'Univers.'² But a larger issue may be taken. The belief in progress came in, M. Faguet

¹ *Questions politiques*, p. 316.

² *Ibid.*, p. 270.

tells us, in recent times, and is not to be taken for granted. Why should mankind progress ? he asks in effect ; and indeed, it is not easy to answer the question. Why should the sun rise to-morrow ? We do not know ; nor can we be certain, in one sense of the word, that it will do so. But, as the memory of man supplies no instance to the contrary, we are justified in supposing that it will, and in making our plans for to-morrow and a series of to-morrows accordingly. The case of progress is similar. The history of mankind has been one of progress—slow, painful, interrupted here and there, it is true, but still progress. Nor is it the fact that this progress has been limited to science, that morality and religion have declined, are declining, and are likely to decline. Were this so, a gloomier forecast than M. Faguet's would be justified ; but the reverse is, in fact, the case. That both have developed to such an extent that the old forms have become inadequate at certain points to the new content, and that this disproportion causes confusion for the time being, such confusion as the smoke and heat of a battle may occasion to the combatants, is true. But these results and the causes to which they are due are temporary ; to doubt this is to misread the present and forget the past. The science of morals is, *qua* science, progressive ; social morality, as yet in its infancy, is, it is scarcely too much to say, the creation of our own time. In a sense this may seem a return upon the past ; for early morality was social, and attached to groups—the family, the clan—rather than to individuals. But it is a return with a fuller consciousness of itself and a larger content : ethical notions have been transformed and purified, as is the Rhône in the Lake of Geneva, by passing through the individual and interior stage. The duties of class to class, and of the individual not only to the class to which he belongs, but to the various social groups which make up the community, are recognised : if, to take M. Faguet's example, morality in the restricted sense of the term is less definite than it was, the uncertainty is due not to a less but to a greater sense of moral obligation and of the foundation on which this rests.

So with religion. Increasing knowledge has made

certain religious conceptions no longer tenable : the moral content of theology means more to us than the metaphysical ; we distinguish the idea, which is eternal, from the clothing in which it comes to us, which changes as years change. Not a little of the historical basis on which Christianity was believed to rest has been discredited ; and, though we need not take the actual analysis as final, there is an increasing unwillingness to regard religion as standing or falling with any alleged fact or event, however well authenticated this may seem to us ; a disposition to fall back upon spiritual experience as the criterion of spiritual truth. But to suppose that this change of standpoint on our part is destructive of religion is to confuse its form with its substance : the landscape is not lost but extended as the traveller mounts the hill.

Les religions, comme les philosophies, sont toutes vaines ; mais la religion, pas plus que la philosophie, n'est vaine. Sans l'espoir d'aucune récompense l'homme se dévoue pour son devoir jusqu'à la mort. Victime de l'injustice de ses semblables, il lève les yeux au ciel. Une cause généreuse, où il n'a nul intérêt, fait souvent battre son cœur. Les *Élohim* ne logent pas dans les neiges éternelles ; on ne les rencontre pas, comme du temps de Moïse, dans les défilés des montagnes ; ils habitent dans le cœur de l'homme. Vous ne les chasserez jamais de là. La justice, le vrai, le bien sont voulus par une force supérieure. Le progrès de la raison n'a été funeste qu'aux faux dieux. Le vrai Dieu de l'univers, le Dieu unique, celui qu'on adore en faisant une bonne action, ou en cherchant une vérité, ou en conseillant bien les hommes, est établi pour l'éternité.¹

M. Faguet's forecast errs by regarding the present only. If this stood alone, did we see only the actual condition of mankind—the sufferings of the poor, the evil passions of the bad, the vices and frailties of average humanity—we might despair. But these things are not new in history : in spite of, perhaps even through, them we have advanced from small beginnings to great achievements, to a higher level, into a purer air. And, if the present is the material

¹ Renan, *Histoire du Peuple d'Israël*, i. 15.

out of which the future is made, the past gives the key to its making : mankind is not going back but forward, and what has been shall be. For—

Not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light ;
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly !
But westward, look, the land is bright !

VIII. ZOLA : LES TROIS VILLES

THAT failure and success are inadequate tests of merit is a truth which, though liable to be wrested by the indolent and incompetent to their destruction, is sufficiently well established. Chance plays a greater part in human affairs than moralists commonly care to admit ; and the qualities that make for success are not always the highest. Especially is this the case in literature and, generally, in the things of mind.

Dieu, qui abandonne le monde aux violents et aux forts, leur refuse presque toujours les dons de finesse qui seuls dans les choses spéculatives mènent à la vérité. . . . Le discernement des nuances sera toujours le fait d'un petit nombre ; mais ce petit nombre, quand il s'agit des œuvres de l'esprit, est le seul dont le suffrage doive être recherché.¹

The philosophical statesman is seldom a force in politics, or the theologian a popular preacher : the writers, at least of our own day, whose works command the largest sale are scarcely representative of literature ; a Meredith waits for recognition till his hair is grey. To catch the popular ear an author must, indeed, possess certain qualities, and possess them in an exceptional degree—sentiment of a sort, imagination, fluency, persistence, the didactic vein. But these gifts may be found where balance, good taste, humour, the spiritual insight that makes the artist, are conspicuous by their absence. The result is—well, more than one name will occur to everybody. It would be unjust to M. Zola to class him with such persons as these. He was a man of genuine, if perverse, talent ; but the success of his writings, which

¹ Renan, *Études d'Histoire religieuse*, p. 339.

was phenomenal, is out of proportion to their worth, and is no index to his rank in letters. He had a rare power of portraiture, but his portraits magnified ; he saw and depicted on an enlarged scale. He did not excel in the delineation of character : the finer shades were an unknown world to him ; neither subtlety nor delicacy of perception was his. His art was that of a scene-painter, strong and vivid ; his reproductions of place were lifelike : when it was objected to his 'Rome' that much of it was guide-book, it should have been added that it was the very best guide-book that had ever been written, even for Rome. The reader is literally transported. He inhales the scent of the violets on the steps of the Trinità de' Monti, and breathes the pungent air of the Corso ; the sun strikes hot upon him as he passes from it into the great Piazza beyond. The naturalistic romance aims at reproduction pure and simple. It is seen at its best when, as here, it reproduces literally what is worthy of being reproduced. But not everything in nature is worthy of being reproduced. When every allowance has been made for convention and standpoint, there is a residuum that is trivial and sordid, and so out of place in art. Nor, in truth, does the artist, endeavour as he will, ever reproduce simply.

It is the mind that sees : the outward eyes
Present the object, but the mind describes.

'“ La Terre ” n'est pas tant l'œuvre d'un réaliste exact que d'un idéaliste perversi,' is the acute criticism of M. Anatole France. The eye sees what it chooses to see, and overlooks the rest as indifferent : a process of selection, conscious or unconscious, accompanies intelligent action, be this what it may. Zola selected his subjects as unmistakably and as arbitrarily as Chateaubriand or Victor Hugo, though the principles which guided his selection were other than theirs. His instinct for the nauseous bordered on genius, and it was equalled by his skill in presenting it. 'L'affolement d'ordure,' to use his own phrase, possessed him. He resolved the atmosphere of life into stenches ; he dwelt with a diseased insistence on natural processes, on

physical and moral perversions from which normally constituted people instinctively turn aside. 'Zola est un sanglier,' said one of his admirers to Leconte de Lisle, referring to the force of the author of 'Nana' and 'Pot-bouille.' 'Il n'a rien de sauvage,' was the answer, suggesting that the pigsty supplied a closer parallel than the forest.¹

I beheld the world . . .

Till down upon the filthy ground I dropped,
And tore the violets up to get the worms.

It is said, and in a sense with truth, that his books are neither corrupt nor corrupting. It is when it is idealised that evil fascinates; naked and unashamed it disgusts and repels. But this repulsion is too dearly bought at the price of the poisoning of the springs of life. To see the world permanently out of focus is a greater outrage on Nature than the passing delinquency which arises less from deliberate choice or purpose than from weakness of will. Others beside Zola have suffered from this defect of vision; but he was the first to erect it into a principle, to make it the foundation and common property of a school. 'Les doctrines sont le reflet du tempérament des hommes,' says M. Lemaître; 'le naturalisme est Zola, Zola tout seul.' Hence his fame; but it is a fame which few will envy. 'Certes je ne lui nierai point sa détestable gloire,' is the judgment of the first of living critics on 'La Terre.'

Persone avant lui n'avait élevé un si haut tas d'immondices. C'est là son monument, dont on ne peut contester la grandeur. Jamais homme n'avait fait un pareil effort pour avilir l'humanité, insulter à toutes les images de la beauté et de l'amour, nier tout ce qui est bon et tout ce qui est bien. Jamais homme n'avait à ce point méconnu l'idéal des hommes. Il y a en nous tous, dans les petits comme dans les grands, chez les humbles comme chez les superbes, un instinct de la beauté, un désir de ce qui orne et de ce qui décore, qui, répandus dans le monde, font la charme de la vie. M. Zola ne le sait pas. Il y a dans l'homme un besoin infini d'aimer qui le divinise. M. Zola ne le sait pas. Le désir et la pudeur se mêlent parfois en nuances

¹ *Leconte des Lisle et ses Amis*, p. 260.

délicieuses dans les âmes. M. Zola ne le sait pas. Il est sur la terre des formes magnifiques et de nobles pensées ; il est des âmes pures et des cœurs héroïques. M. Zola ne le sait pas. Bien des faiblesses même, bien des erreurs et des fautes ont leur beauté touchante. La douleur est sacrée. La sainteté des larmes suffit à rendre l'homme auguste à l'homme. M. Zola ne le sait pas. Il ne sait pas que les grâces sont décentes, que l'ironie philosophique est indulgente et douce, et que les choses humaines n'inspirent que deux sentiments aux esprits bien faits : l'admiration et la pitié. M. Zola est digne d'une profonde pitié.¹

The indictment is as severe as it is merited ; but it is an indictment of the artist, not the man. Men are not to be judged, happily, by their opinions, literary, artistic, or otherwise ; by the school or sect to which they belong. The blundering logic which concludes from opinion to character and conduct is belied at every turn by experience, because opinion and belief are on the surface, and, for the most part, determined for us ; character, on the other hand, is essential and our own. The last years of Zola's life fell on one of those decisive moments in a people's history when the good and the bad range themselves instinctively on opposite sides. Such moments are rare. Ordinarily—and this is what makes life so difficult for most of us—truth and falsehood are interwoven in what seems an inextricable confusion ; but it is not so always. In the case referred to the individual in whom the conflict centred was as transparent a symbol as was the wounded traveller in the parable ; the issue was between good and evil, right and wrong. The nation was beside itself with rage and terror ; no fiction was too palpable for acceptance, no crime too atrocious for justification ; the panic swept over all, irrespective of class or calling ; the official guardians of religion and morality were the first to betray their charge. Put not your trust in princes ! The priest and the Levite, not content with the negative attitude of passing by on the other side, hounded on the bolder but not more guilty criminals to their bloody work. It required no ordinary courage to

¹ Anatole France, *La Vie littéraire*, tome i. p. 236.

stand against the overwhelming tide of feeling ; the names of religion and patriotism were invoked to cover the vilest treasons, to make foul things fair and fair foul. A few there were who dared, greatly daring ; representatives of unpopular creeds, Jews, Protestants, Freethinkers, Catholics of the less orthodox type ; journalists, and men of letters, who had hitherto made little show of seriousness of purpose and given little evidence of power of self-sacrifice to a cause. It is to the immortal honour of Zola that he was foremost among these men ; that in the eternal battle between light and darkness he struck unhesitatingly and without flinching for light.

That he should have acted as he did on this memorable occasion was not so surprising as it may appear at first sight ; it might have been foreseen by those who read him between the lines, and took the trouble to disentangle the idea underlying his work from its very unideal setting. An immense pity for mankind filled him ; life, as he saw it, was as the scroll of the prophet—in it was written lamentation, and mourning, and woe. He surveyed the world as one colour-blind : its beauty and joy escaped him ; he saw only its reverse side—its cruelty, its wretchedness, its pain. But if he raked, like Swift, among the *faeces* of humanity, it was not with Swift's savage scorn and hopelessness : he had compassion on the multitude, black as he painted it ; he looked for a better day far off. In the Trilogy of the Three Cities—*Lourdes, Rome, and Paris*—this side of him comes uppermost : where the description is most minute and microscopic it is subordinate to a purpose which cannot escape the most superficial reader. These volumes embody his philosophy and set forth his criticism of life. That the philosophy is not that of a philosopher, that the criticism is not that of a critic, may be granted. One whole side of life—and that the most real and the most illuminating—lay, as has been said, outside the field of his vision ; and, on the other, his limitations are patent. He sees everything under an artificial light and in masses of unrelieved colour ; he is direct to the verge of brutality, and beyond it ; he is blind to half-tints and effects of shadow. His work,

therefore, leaves an impression of glare ; he never suggests, he never interprets ; his pictures have no background ; the figures are larger, the landscape is more, clearly defined, than in Nature. His talent is that of a supremely clever journalist : its strength consists in the power of catching and presenting certain salient features of a situation ; its defect in a certain lack of intelligence and insight, an inability to penetrate below the surface, to get away from the standpoint of the average man. This, indeed, raised to a high point, is M. Zola's own standpoint—and limit. Clearly as he sees what he sees, he sees less than many lesser men see : he is weak in analysis, and weaker in construction ; he has more feeling than knowledge, more heart than head. A philosophy of the man in the street ; yet such a philosophy has its uses : its grasp of fact keeps it in touch with experience ; while, as documents, as a record of the average mind of the time that produced them, the works in which it is contained are of lasting worth. If they are monotonous, so, for most men, is existence ; if they are crowded with a mass of petty detail, so is the world as it presents itself to us ; if one note—that of religion—is pressed with what may seem undue persistence, it is because religion, taken largely, constitutes half and underlies the whole of life.

The canvas in each of three works is crowded : *un grand mouvement de foule*, this is what Zola delights in painting ; a hundred minor dramas wind in and round without obscuring the essential plot. This is simple. Pierre Froment has inherited the religious temperament from his mother and the scientific from his father, a distinguished chemist. On the strength of the first he enters the priesthood, his mind as yet unformed. The seminary training leaves his intelligence dormant ; later the inevitable awakening comes. He becomes conscious of himself, his surroundings, his faculties : the scientific position dawns upon him ; the dogmatic fades, gradually but surely, like night before day. It is not a break, but a development : the horizon has expanded ; the grown man puts away childish things. Such transitions, however, are painful : the ties that bind us to the past, our own and that of our fellow-

men, to that which, if it does not actually constitute, is so intimately associated with all that is best in history and life that the two appear inseparable, are not easily broken ; he struggles to retain or recover his dying faith. With this end in view he betakes himself to Lourdes, the centre of popular, and Rome, the centre of official, Catholicism. In neither can he find rest ; the one is Illusion, the other Survival. The last volume of the series, ' Paris,' leaves him in what, according to M. Zola, is the conclusion of the whole matter—a scientific and philanthropic moralism, progressive within the limits of time and space, but knowing no horizon beyond the present :—

Tecum habita, et nôris quam sit tibi curta supellex.

' Lourdes ' is a description, remarkable both from a psychological and pathological standpoint, of the phenomena to be witnessed at the famous Grotto ; a description so full and so detailed that it resolves itself into a study of certain forms of hysteria ; of the abnormal physical and mental conditions which accompany manifestations of religious enthusiasm on a large scale. Its subject is popular religion—religion, that is, experienced not as the easy church-going world experiences it, but as an elemental passion possessing men like love, fear, or hatred—swaying, uprooting, devastating : popular as opposed to philosophical—unreflecting, appealing to emotion, careless of symmetry in conception and form. To see in the book no more than a criticism of certain beliefs and devotions of modern Catholicism is to miss its real meaning. It is natural that a French writer should take these things as his text, but they are the text only ; the discourse based upon them is of wider application. ' These things are an allegory ' ; the story of Bernadette is repeated wherever suffering and aspiration meet in the heart of man.

Si le rêve d'une enfant souffrante avait suffi pour amener les peuples, pour faire pleuvoir les millions, et pousser du sol une cité nouvelle, n'était-ce pas que ce rêve venait apaiser un peu la faim des pauvres hommes ? l'insatiable besoin qu'ils ont d'être trompés et consolés ? Elle avait rouvert

l'inconnu, sans doute, à un moment social et historique favorable ; et les foules s'étaient précipitées. Oh ! se réfugier dans le mystère, quand la réalité est si dure, s'en remettre au miracle, puis que la nature cruelle semble une longue injustice ! Mais on a beau organiser l'inconnu, le réduire en dogmes, en faire des religions révélées ; il n'y a toujours au fond que cet appel de la souffrance, ce cri de la vie, exigeant la santé, la joie, le bonheur fraternelle, jusqu'à l'accepter dans un autre monde, s'il ne peut être sur cette terre.¹

Or, as M. Zola put it more crudely to an interviewer—

Lourdes, the Grotto, the cures, the miracles are the creation of that need of the Lie, that necessity for credulity which is a characteristic of human nature. . . . Lourdes grew up in spite of all opposition, just as the Christian religion did, because suffering humanity in its despair must cling to something, must have some hope ; and, on the other hand, because humanity thirsts after illusions. In a word, it is the story of the foundation of all religions.

The book, then, viewed more closely, resolves itself into a study of the nature and origin of religion as such. Thus viewed it contains a truth and suggests a falsehood. That illusion enters into religion is true : that religion has its origin in, or is in itself, illusion is untrue. M. Zola has fallen into the common logical fallacy of taking the part for the whole cause.

'La religion c'est la part de l'idéal dans la vie humaine,' says Renan.² It is the outlet by which the generality of men escape from the prose of the world into poetry, from the weariness, the pain, the commonplace of existence into a serener air. Hence its kinship with art and with philosophy : for here, too, the higher life reveals itself ; we pass from the seen to the unseen. And popular religion precedes philosophical, as being the material on which this works. The two advance with a certain interval between them ; the latter never overtakes or completely identifies itself with the former : or, to vary the metaphor, like two parallel straight lines, produce them as you will, they never meet. Each is relative, the one to the feeling, the other

¹ *Lourdes*, p. 448.

² *Études d'Histoire religieuse*, p. 1.

to the thought of its time ; but, as thought varies much and feeling little, while the variations of philosophical religion—that is, of theology—are wide and many, popular religion remains much the same in every age. The theological formulas of St. Paul were unintelligible to the generation which followed that of their author ; the key to his impassioned dialectic had been lost : the Platonic metaphysics of the creeds, the Aristotelian terminology of the schoolmen, the forensic catchwords of the Reformers of the sixteenth century, the facile teleology of the ‘ Evidences ’—these ways of thinking and speaking are obsolete, and have to be construed to us as if out of a dead language. Convention goes for so much in these matters that this change of standpoint is interpreted by careless or superficial observers as evidence of unbelief. It is nothing of the sort. What it is evidence of is the necessity of the periodical revision and reformulation of our theological conceptions. New bottles must be provided for new wine. With religious feeling it is otherwise. The phenomena of the first age of Christianity, the enthusiasm, the conviction, the visible gifts of the Spirit are reproduced without substantial change in every time. They are found indifferently among Protestants and Catholics. Nor are they peculiar to Christianity. They are associated with religion as such, and exist wherever this is a power—in India, or in Mohammedan Africa—under the most diverse forms. That illusion enters largely into these phenomena, and the experiences which underlie them, will not be questioned. Among the first Christians, for example, the nearest approach to a dogma was the belief in the Parousia, the immediate second coming of Christ. The attitude of the infant communities was one of intense expectation : before to-morrow’s sun rose, or to-day’s set, He might be there. The element of enthusiasm, discouraged in later days, was the distinctive mark of believers. They heard heavenly voices ; their Lord spoke with them ; they saw visions and dreamed dreams. The atmosphere in which they moved was one of the marvellous. The broken and inarticulate cries which escaped from those on whom the Spirit fell were taken for unknown tongues, which others

of the brethren professed to interpret. They exercised and experienced gifts of healing ; they spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Anything less resembling the decorous functions of the modern Churches, Protestant or Catholic, than their assemblies can scarcely be imagined. There was neither priest nor liturgy ; everyone prayed or prophesied aloud as he, or she, would : all spoke or shouted at the same time, no one being willing to wait for his turn or to give way to another ; the sacramental meal degenerated too often into a clamorous and greedy orgy at which one was hungry and another drunk. 'These men are full of new wine,' was the interpretation put on the miracle of Pentecost by eye-witnesses. St. Paul, urging the Corinthians to self-control, remarks, with what may have seemed to them an excess of candour, that a stranger, admitted to their religious gatherings, would in all probability come to the conclusion that they were mad.¹

A party of order rose inevitably, St. Paul being its leader. He ceased to insist on the thought of the Parousia, which he found by experience distracted the converts from the practical duties of life. Though he did not venture to condemn it, it is evident that he thoroughly disliked the Glossolalia. He distrusted the external and so-called miraculous gifts of the Spirit, the signs and wonders, laying stress rather on its fruits—charity, meekness, temperance ; 'against such there is no law.'² He governed the Churches of which he was the founder autocratically enough, and as one who magnified his office—when present by word of mouth, when absent by letters or by itinerant delegates. Had his career not been cut short, the episcopate, or some form of Church government closely resembling it, might have established itself among the Christian communities a century or more before it actually did. But though for practical purposes it was necessary to subordinate the enthusiastic element in religion to the official it was the regulated, not eliminated : it has never been absent from Christianity where this has been more than nominal ; and

¹ Acts ii. 10 ; 1 Thessalonians iv. ; 1 Corinthians xi. xiv.

² Thessalonians ii. 2, iii. 12 ; 1 Corinthians xiv. 22.

from time to time it has shown, and shows, itself impatient of control. Without it religion becomes a philosophy or a convention : ' the Gospel is an apocalyptic message,'¹ and an apocalypse transports and inspires. Unchecked, on the other hand, it sets reason and sobriety at defiance ; anarchy, moral and intellectual, follows in its train. Like the great forces of nature, fire and flood, it is a good servant but a bad master : it can fertilise, but it can devastate ; it can bring to the birth, but it can destroy. Better than any other religious communion the Church of Rome has known how to deal with this inevitable but ambiguous ally ; nowhere has her consummate genius for government shown itself so unmistakably as here. The rigid uniformity of the Churches of the East attempted to suppress it. ' Naturam expellas furcâ ' : it reappeared in the shape of a thousand fanatical sects, from the Montanists and Manichees of the past to the Stundists and Doukhobors of modern Russia : stifled in the conventional piety of Protestantism, it took shelter in dissent of every variety and complexion, from Quakerism to Methodism, from Salvationism to Faith-healing and Spiritualism. Wiser in her generation, Rome has known how to retain fanatics and utilise fanaticism ; the devotional life of Catholicism provides scope for their ardour, its missionary work at home and abroad for their activity ; the religious orders offer the discipline of a home to that charismatic Christianity which else, overflowing its channels, would be lost to the Church. So with that appetite for the marvellous so deeply rooted in our nature. The Church does not—she neither could nor would—extirpate it ; but she restrains it, ordinarily, within the limits of ecclesiastical dogma. At times, as in the case of Lourdes, the enthusiasm of the multitudes is irrepressible and breaks through all barriers ; but this is the exception, not the rule. In the beginning Bernadette's story was disbelieved by everyone — curé, bishop, prefect. The Minister of Public Worship intervened with the authority of the Government ; the Grotto was closed, the offerings removed.

¹ Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, i. 41.

Pendant plusieurs mois la lutte continua. Et ce fut un spectacle extraordinaire que ces hommes de bon sens ; le ministre, le préfet, le commissaire de police, animés certainement des meilleures intentions, se battant contre la foule toujours croissante des désespérés, qui ne voulaient pas qu'on leur fermât la porte du rêve. Les autorités exigeaient l'ordre, le respect d'une religion sage, le triomphe de la raison, tandis que le besoin d'être heureux emportait le peuple au désir exalté du salut, dans ce monde et dans l'autre. Oh ! ne plus souffrir, conquérir l'égalité du bonheur, ne plus marcher que sous la protection d'une Mère juste et bonne, ne mourir que pour se réveiller au ciel ! Et c'était forcément ce désir brûlant des multitudes, cette folie sainte de l'universelle joie, qui devait balayer la rigide et morose conception d'une société bien réglée, où les crises épidémiques des hallucinations religieuses sont condamnés, comme attentatoires au repos des esprits sains.¹

Lourdes, then, is nothing new either in history or in human nature ; it is a particular instance of a universal fact. When it has been classified in this way it is no longer *sui generis* ; there are similar phenomena with which we can compare it elsewhere. What must be our judgment as to the objectivity of the element of the marvellous common to such ? First, that—like the supernatural, so called, in general—it has to be largely, very largely, discounted. Few ghost stories will stand examination. When first heard the impression left is vivid ; but, if we test them, the facts evaporate, resolving themselves to a great extent, if not altogether, into hearsay, imagination, fiction conscious or unconscious : a story grows. The late Dr. J. R. Gasquet, in a remarkable paper contributed to a Catholic periodical under the title of 'The Cures at Lourdes,'² seems not unwilling to extend this principle to them. 'The great majority of the cases I witnessed at Lourdes were evidently, in one way or another, due to the influence of the mind on the body ; but I saw a few instances which, *if they stand the test of further inquiry*'—the italics are ours—'I cannot ascribe to any natural agency.' M. Zola examined a number of persons on the spot, and could find none who

¹ *Lourdes*, p. 223.

² *The Dublin Review*, October 1894.

would declare that he had witnessed a miracle. He investigated the case of Clémentine Trouvé, the Sophie of the story, carefully. Having heard that there were three or four ladies living in Lourdes who could guarantee the facts, he interviewed them. The first said no, she could not vouch for anything ; she had seen nothing ; he had better ask some one else. The others all answered in the same way ; nowhere was he able to find any corroboration of the cure, circumstantial as the account appeared in the first instance. And so throughout. It is not necessary to suppose conscious falsehood in the witnesses ; 'it is the facts themselves that lie.'

Again, the word 'miracle' is, to say the least, ambiguous. The definition, 'Aliquid dicitur esse miraculum, quod fit præter ordinem totius naturæ creatæ,'¹ presupposes that the whole course of nature is known to us. But this is not so ; the most willing believer, then, can never be certain that he is in the presence of a miracle properly so called. The question, it will be urged, is one of words. Has a cure been brought about, at Lourdes or in the sick-room or hospital ward ? it is God's work. The heavens declare His glory. 'Majus miraculum est gubernatio totius mundi quam saturatio quinque millium hominum de quinque panibus,' says St. Augustine ;² the order of Nature is a miracle greater and more significant than the signs and wonders to which, by an abuse of language, we confine the name. All the more misleading is it, it may be replied, to draw a hard-and-fast line between the natural and the supernatural ; and so, practically, if not in words, to confine the Deity to a portion of the universe which, vast as it is, diminishes as knowledge advances, and whose boundaries, in consequence, are fleeting and insecure. This is to make every increase of knowledge a victory over, instead of a fuller revelation of, the Divine. No ; He is all, or He is nothing ; we take all from Him when we give Him less than all. The point insisted on by the defenders of the 'miraculous' character of the phenomena that present

¹ St. Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, I. i. ex. 4.

² Tractatus 24 in Joannem.

themselves at Lourdes is that they are irreducible to law and defy classification and prediction. 'Les guérisons se produisent en dehors de toutes les règles . . . le médecin assiste au bouleversement de toute loi.'¹ In other words, the abnormal, the extravagant is a note of the immediate operation of the Deity : God works by caprice, not by reason ; by *coup d'état*, not by law. We have not so learned Him. In the arbitrary, the inconsequent, the irrational we see the ignorance of man, not the finger of God. It is in the march of the planets, the recurrence of the seasons, the process of history, the growth of mind—in order, measure, and harmony—that He manifests Himself to us. Where these are wanting, taught by the past, we surmise the presence of forces unknown, or imperfectly known, to us ; a star not yet within the field of our vision ; a veiling rather than a revelation of the Divine. That a certain number of cures for which medical science cannot account have taken place at Lourdes is probable enough. There are few physicians in large practice whose personal experience does not cover much that they can neither account for nor explain. This shows that medicine is not an exact science, and has not reached an exhaustive knowledge of its subject matter. The most incredulous scientist will not demur to this ; in particular the limits of heredity, the pathology of the brain, the nature and extent of nerve affections, the inter-relation of what are loosely distinguished as physical and psychical conditions—these and kindred departments of physiology and therapeutics have been as yet so imperfectly explored as to constitute a *terra incognita* to science. Shall we place here, since the map of the known world does not contain it, the realm of miracle ? Alas ! every advance of knowledge removes it farther from us ; its shores, *semper cedentia retro*, are never reached by us, sail on as we will. They rise before us in the morning light, and as we gaze they vanish : a floating bank of cloud, a mist on the horizon, has mocked us ; the expanse of ocean, infinite and unbroken, surrounds us as of old.

The disposition which shows itself in so many quarters

¹ Dr. Boissarie, *Lourdes : Histoire médicale*, p. 438.

to base faith on ignorance is consistent neither with faith nor sincerity; half-belief of this kind springs from unconscious and leads to conscious unbelief. The instinct that bids us escape from the iron circle of necessity by which we are hemmed in does not, indeed, deceive us. Nothing in Nature is vain; desire implicitly contains its object, and history bears witness to the gradual emancipation of man. But this argument, valid in itself, must be applied with the utmost circumspection. From the fact that the existence of a natural desire implies the existence of its object it by no means follows that this object is what we conceive it to be. It may be other, far other, than we think. It may be realisable only on another plane than that of our actual experience, or in ourselves rather than in the world without. We look, for example, for Wisdom, Justice, Benevolence. Do not let us deceive ourselves. We shall not find these virtues here and now in their fulness; but we and the world become wiser, more just, and more benevolent by desiring them: and we believe, though we do not know how or when it will be so, that in the end they will be realised, and God be all in all. Such considerations may throw light on what, to those who reflect, is so infinitely perplexing—the non-fulfilment of the great mass of prayer. Not one prayer in a thousand is granted, in the natural sense of the word; nor can we discern any trace of law in the selection of the favoured cases. We can but remind ourselves that in its supremest instance the prayer of petition is conditioned by the nature of things and the will of the Father—‘if it be possible,’ and ‘nevertheless not my will but Thine be done.’ There are antinomies in knowledge which are to be recognised, not reconciled; where to suppress either factor is to introduce an element of confusion into the problem whose solution is sought. The philosopher has reason who, conscious of the dependence of the part on the whole, submits himself with resignation to the universal order; the believer, perhaps, has greater and more who, moved by the pity of human things—the *lacrymæ rerum*—and knowing that the nations of the earth are made

for health,¹ invokes the intervention of a higher power between him and the tyranny of Nature and the ill-will of man.

More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of ; wherefore let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats,
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands in prayer
Both for themselves and those that call them friend ?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.²

This does not necessarily involve a theological, or even a theistic, interpretation of the universe.

The prayer instinct is independent of doctrinal complications. . . . Prayer, or inner communion with the Spirit of the higher universe of which the visible world is part, is a process wherein work is really done, and spiritual energy flows in and produces effects, psychological or material, within the phenomenal world. But if we ask to *whom* we pray, the answer (strangely enough) must be that *that* does not much matter. . . . We do not know enough of what takes place in the spiritual world to know how the prayer operates, *who* is cognisant of it, or through what channel the grace is given. . . . To say that God hears us is merely to restate the first principle, that grace flows in from the infinite spiritual world.³

What is so painful and so repulsive in Lourdes and similar centres of popular devotion is not so much the fanaticism of the pilgrims, the commercial element inseparable from the necessity of providing transport and lodging for the multitude of strangers, or even the incongruous emergence of those lower passions never wholly absent where men are met together, and separated by so small an interval from overwrought emotion, whatever its source, as the deliberate organisation of hysteria, the training of suggestion, the exploitation of disease. Everything in the

¹ 'Sanabiles fecit nationes orbis terrarum,' *Wisdom*, i. 14.

² W. James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, pp. 467-85.

³ 'The Passing of Arthur.'

pilgrimage is calculated to disturb the equilibrium of the faculties, to stimulate, to excite, to strain. The insanitary conditions under which the journey is made, the hurry, the crowding, the insufficient food and sleep, the incessant religious exercises, the acute tension of every sense and nerve, all work up to a calculated climax.

Ce fut un vent de délire qui passa, abattant tous les fronts. . . . Il n'y eut plus de directions possibles, les voix se confondirent, un vertige emporta toutes les volontés. Les cris, les appels, les prières, se brisaient dans les gémissements. Des corps se soulevaient de leur grabat de misère, des bras tremblants se tendaient, des mains crispées semblaient vouloir arrêter le miracle au passage. . . . Alors, au plus fort de cette folie sacrée, dans les supplications et dans les sanglots, comme dans un orage, lorsque le ciel s'ouvre et que la foudre tombe, des miracles éclatèrent. Une paralytique se leva, jeta ses béquilles. Il y eut un cri perçant, une femme apparut, debout sur son matelas, enveloppée d'une couverture blanche, ainsi que d'un suaire ; et l'on disait que c'était une phthisique, à demi-morte, resuscitée. Coup sur coup la grâce retentait deux fois encore : une aveugle qui aperçut la Grotte soudainement, dans une flamme ; une muette qui tomba sur les deux genoux en remerciant la Sainte Vierge, à voix haute et claire. Et toutes se prosternaient de même aux pieds de Notre-Dame de Lourdes, éperdues de joie et de reconnaissance.¹

It is very pitiful, it is very humiliating, it is very vain. For such things are, in truth, the ghost of a past which has gone from us, never to return. The soul of religion is not, and never was, in them ; time was, indeed, when they were associated with it, but they are so no longer ; in vain do we seek the living among the dead. No other conclusion than that of Pierre is possible.

Cela s'imposait avec la brutalité d'un fait ; la foi naïve de l'enfant qui s'agenouille et qui prie, la primitive foi des peuples jeunes, courbé sous la terreur sacrée de leur ignorance, était morte. Des milliers de pèlerins avaient beau se rendre chaque année à Lourdes, les peuples n'étaient

¹ *Lourdes*, pp. 171, 404.

plus avec eux, la tentative de cette résurrection de la foi totale, de la foi des siècles morts, sans révolte ni examen, devait échouer fatalement. L'histoire ne retourne pas en arrière, l'humanité ne peut revenir à l'enfance, les temps ont trop changés, trop de souffles nouveaux ont semé de nouvelles moissons, pour que les hommes d'aujourd'hui repoussent tels que les hommes d'autrefois. C'était décisif. Lourdes n'était qu'un accident explicable, dont la violence de réaction apportait même une preuve de l'agonie suprême où se débattait la croyance, sous l'antique forme de catholicisme. Jamais plus la nation entière ne se prosternerait, comme l'ancienne nation croyante, dans les cathédrales du douzième siècle, pareille à un troupeau docile sous les mains du Maître. S'entêter en aveugle à vouloir cela, ce serait se briser contre l'impossible et courir peut-être aux grandes catastrophes morales.¹

It may seem thankless not to acknowledge the cures—for no one doubts that there are such—that are brought about at the shrine; and the religious emotions—dependence, self-surrender, gratitude—that are called forth among the pilgrims. Dr. Gasquet lays the chief stress on the latter. 'Though much is made, of course, of the supernatural cures that are said to occur, they occupy at Lourdes a secondary place to an extent which it is difficult for anyone who has not been there to realise. Moral and spiritual blessings are sought for more earnestly and more generally than the healing of bodily infirmities.' With regard to the former, he uses language guarded in the extreme. In general 'the improvement was not more than could conceivably be produced by the action of the mind on the body. These patients might be divided into two classes, in one of which the symptoms were purely neurotic, and where complete recovery was the rule,' the most numerous examples being hysterical paraplegia and paralysis: while in the other 'examination easily detected the presence of organic disease.' These cases—in which, the local disease remaining unaffected, the general state of the patient greatly improved—were comparatively few; 'most of those that I saw were instances of osteo-arthritis, a fact not without interest

¹ *Lourdes*, p. 589.

considering the neurotic affinities of the disease.' Yet, while this was the case with the great majority of the cures which he witnessed, he saw, as has been said—

a few instances which, *if they stand the test of further inquiry*, I cannot ascribe to any natural agency. I am not writing a formal work on Lourdes, so that I need not enter into such abstract questions as the limits of the possible influence of the nervous system in healing instantaneously abscesses, wounds, and other organic maladies. I should have done so with great reluctance because we have not the light of actual experience to guide us. Even Professor Charcot, when he looked for cures parallel to those of Lourdes, found none in his own vast clinique, but had to go back a hundred and fifty years to the tomb of the Jansenist deacon Paris.¹

In view of the extraordinary case of Pierre Delannoy, and its still more extraordinary sequel,² Dr. Gasquet's qualification—'*if they stand the test of further inquiry*'—is significant. But it is possible—perhaps probable—that religious emotion has a place of its own in the field of abnormal brain and nerve conditions: that, as certain temperaments are predisposed to see ghosts, so certain cases are predisposed to experience the mind or faith-cure. Dr. Beauclair, while flatly refusing to confirm the diagnosis of his colleagues, sends Marie to Lourdes, saying that she would certainly be cured there if she herself were convinced of it, and even predicting the exact manner in which the miracle would come about.³ But the account must be balanced. It would be a greater miracle than any of those alleged if, for one cured, as was Marie de Guersaint, hundreds did not suffer serious and lasting injury from the insanitary conditions under which the pilgrimage is made and the nervous excitement of which it is the occasion; while the stimulation of the religious emotions is dearly, too dearly, bought by the degradation of religion to those lower levels from which it has slowly, painfully, but surely, risen. These have their place in the evolution of religion;

¹ The *Dublin Review*, October 1894.

² *Lourdes* (English translation), note, p. 491.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

but to return to them is spiritual death. The penalty of looking back is the loss even of the semblance of life. The patriarch's wife is a perpetual symbol—'she looked from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.'

'Rome' is a study of the Papacy; of the temper and methods of the great Congregations or tribunals to which the administrative work of the Catholic Church is entrusted; of the official Roman mind. The experiment of Lourdes had been a failure; Pierre Froment left it dead to faith. He did not, indeed, throw off the dress or abandon the life of an ecclesiastic. But, refusing all ecclesiastical preferment, he resigned himself to a life of inaction. He regarded the mysteries of religion as symbols, necessary for mankind in its infancy, but to be discarded when the human race, instructed and purified, should have acquired the power of apprehending unveiled truth. Pending this—probably—somewhat distant consummation he came across the practical problems presented by the condition of the Paris poor. These appealed strongly to him; he threw himself into good works, and associated himself with the representatives of Christian Socialism—the Abbé Rose, a French Don Bosco; Cardinal Bergerot, a bishop of liberal sympathies; and the Vicomte Philibert de la Choue, a figure obviously modelled on that of the Comte Albert de Mun. The result of this activity was a book—'La Nouvelle Rome'—written from an undogmatic standpoint, and touching, with more zeal than discretion, on such burning topics as the temporal power of the Pope and the alleged miracles at Lourdes; the whole culminating in an impassioned appeal for a new religion, a reformed Catholicism, spacious, unritual, humanitarian, which, springing, like the old, from the historic centre of unity, should meet the wants and satisfy the aspirations of a new race of men. The phrase—a new religion—is open, it must be admitted, to misconception. The work is denounced to the Congregation of the 'Index'; and the author determines to go to Rome to hinder, if possible, its condemnation. His ardent temperament, kindled by the sight and memory of the great northern cities with their mass of unwieldy, unhuman pauperism, is

chilled at the outset to find that at Rome Christian Socialism is not taken very seriously. 'Ce n'est en somme que de la littérature,' is the general verdict: its preachers are set down as literary vanities, to be tolerated with good-humoured contempt when they bring pilgrimages and Peter's pence to the Vatican; to be brushed aside like troublesome insects when their dreams conflict with the requirements of ecclesiastical policy or the needs of what are regarded from the official point of view as practical affairs. His gradual awakening to the real Rome, so different from the Rome of his anticipation, is vividly described. He is surrounded by a tangle of intrigue, so complicated that its threads are inextricable, yet so purposeless that it seems to have been woven often for the very intrigue's sake. The air is thick with mystery; reserve, *finesse* are everywhere; nothing is said or done without an ulterior motive; subplot after subplot winds itself in and out of the central scheme till he finds himself like a fly in a spider's web—immeshed, trammelled, helpless. 'Le Vatican apparaissait comme un pays gardé par des dragons, jaloux et traîtres, un pays où l'on ne devait point franchir une porte, risquer un pas, hasarder un membre, sans s'être soigneusement assuré d'avance qu'on n'y laisserait pas le corps entier.'¹ A Pope inaccessible in the recesses of his palace, not to be approached but with set phrase and almost sacramental ritual; living in the modern world, but not of it; a stranger to the mind, the drift, and the temper of his time: cardinals, intransigent and opportunist, men some of routine, some of policy, leaning now to reaction, now to compromise, as the health of the Pontiff varied and the chances of a conclave seemed nearer or more remote; ecclesiastics busy, suave, tenacious, following up the tortuous threads of their purpose in the salons of great ladies, in the anticamere of prelates, in the Vatican itself, as occasion served—such was the Rome of real life, an enigma of which the foreigner can only say, with the shepherd—

Urbem quam dicunt Romam, Melibœe, putavi
Stultus ego huic nostræ similem.

¹ *Rome*, p. 122.

For, indeed, it is like nothing else in the world. It is its own world ; beyond it it believes, as did the Greeks of Hellas, all is barbarism. Its knowledge of the surface of things is inexhaustible and unfailing ; its ignorance of all that lies below this is incredible and entire. Cardinal Boccanera's state of mind is typical.

Son orgueil de prince romain ne connaissait que Rome, il se faisait presque une gloire d'ignorer totalement le monde moderne. . . . ' Je suis allé à Paris une fois, oh ! il y a longtemps, cinquante ans bientôt, et pour y passer une semaine à peine. . . . Depuis cette unique voyage je n'ai pas quitté Rome.' Et, d'un geste de tranquille dédain, il acheva sa pensée. A quoi bon des courses au pays de doute et de la rébellion ? Est-ce que Rome ne suffisait pas, Rome qui gouvernait le monde, la ville éternelle qui, aux temps prédits, devait redevenir la capitale du monde ? ¹

What was Pierre, what was any modern man, to do in such a world as this ? His thoughts, his sympathies, his language—all were a foreign tongue to those about him. Policy was their be-all and end-all : anything in the nature of broad perspective, moral or intellectual, was a closed book to them ; the last questions in the world likely to occur to their minds would be those which bear on the ethical quality of thought or action—is it right ? is it just ? is it true ? Not that they were, necessarily at least, bad men, personally dishonest or unjust ; this would be a northern misreading of Italian character. But they had no manner of interest in ideas as such ; they took them for granted, and concerned themselves with more practical matters, with the material rather than the spiritual side of religion. ' Ils laissent Dieu dans le sanctuaire, ils règnent en son nom.' ² The ideal side of Christianity, in short, meant little to them, the institutional much ; the inversion of this order would have seemed to them no less irrational than irreligious, the first step to revolt. God has given them the government of the Church—this is their axiom : and they mean to keep it. They govern not in the interests of the governed, but in

¹ *Rome*, pp. 89, 99.

² *Ibid.*, p. 117.

their own, which they identify in some strange fashion with His. It is the Divine Right not of a king but of a staff of permanent officials, a self-electing, theocratic caste. Between its representatives and the northern races is a hopeless lack of comprehension and sympathy : it seems brutal to say it, but it is so ; they despise us, and we them.

Of Roman officials of this type Monsignor Nani, the Assessor of the Holy Office, is an example. The reader will be disappointed if he expects to find in him the priest of Protestant melodrama ; he is kindly, intelligent, pious even, and under a surface of Italian astuteness not substantially insincere. An opportunist through and through, while he has little sympathy with Pierre's vision of a new Rome, he has still less with the tactlessness of his opponents : the book was a folly ; its denunciation to the ' Index ' a second and a worse. He leaves no stone unturned to hinder the scandal that would result from the author's contumacy : for, the machinery once set to work, the end, he knows, is a foregone conclusion ; the book cannot but be condemned. He contrives that Pierre shall be encouraged to come to Rome, and welcomed to the Palazzo Boccanera ; that his stay shall be prolonged till the potent influences of the Eternal City have had time to work upon him ; that he shall be hindered at every step of his way, foiled, kept waiting indefinitely, sent here and there from this to that official—secretaries, reporters, assessors, cardinals—till his illusions are dulled, his ardour chilled, his heart weary. Then, after a delay of months, when the ground has been fully broken up, the final *coup* is administered ; he is admitted to the presence of the Pope. Everything works up to this climax—the silence and darkness of the hour, the hope deferred, the sense of individual impotence against the remorseless impersonal pressure of the ecclesiastical machine. What could he do against such odds ? Dreams of resistance vanished in the presence of the frail old man whose voice sounded like the voice of the dead out of buried centuries. One answer only was possible : ' Je me soumets, et je réprouve mon livre.' Once more Rome won a Pyrrhic victory. Silenced, not convinced, Pierre turned his steps

homeward, bruised and broken in spirit, big with ineffectual strivings, a Lamennais of to-morrow, ripe for revolt.

As a work of art 'Rome' stands high. The topographical detail, which has given rise to the hasty criticism that parts of the book are no more than condensed Murray, is introduced of set purpose to illustrate the law of heredity, which the author traces alike through Paganism and Christianity, in ancient, mediæval, and modern Rome. The sketches of Italian life and character are illuminative, and, even when most startling, true to fact. The English reader may be tempted, for example, to think the poison incident ¹ overdrawn. How much truth underlies the numerous poison legends current now, as of old, in Rome it would be difficult to determine; the facts in any given case can be known to a few only, and their lips are sealed. What is significant, however, is that they are widely and even generally believed. Were their scene laid in London, Paris, or Berlin they would be scouted as grotesque; but in Rome it is not so. The city has remained in many ways mediæval; suspicions are entertained and precautions taken which are unheard of and would be thought extravagant elsewhere.

Eh ! oui, le poison, encore [says Prada]. A Rome, la peur en est restée vivace et très grande. Dès qu'une mort y paraît inexplicable, trop prompte ou accompagnée de circonstances tragiques, la première pensée est unanime, tout le monde crie au poison; et remarquez qu'il n'est pas de ville, je crois, où les morts subites sont plus fréquentes, je ne sais au juste pour quelles causes, les fièvres, dit-on. . . . Oui, oui, le poison avec toute sa légende, le poison qui tue comme la foudre et ne laisse pas de trace, la fameuse recette léguée d'âge en âge, sous les empereurs et sous les papes, et jusqu'à nos jours de bourgeoise démocratie.²

Few finer scenes are to be found in modern fiction than that in which Cardinal Boccanera assists at Dario's death and pardons his murderers, the pride of the noble and the caste feeling of the Churchman triumphing over the natural instincts of the man.

¹ *Rome*, p. 489 ff.

² *Ibid.*, p. 493.

Il est des scandales qu'il faut épargner à l'Église, laquelle n'est pas, ne peut être coupable. Livrer un des nôtres aux tribunaux civils, s'il est criminel, est frapper l'Église entière, car les passions mauvaises s'emparent dès lors du procès, pour faire remonter jusqu'à elle la responsabilité du crime. . . . Ah ! pour ma part, que je suis atteint dans ma personne ou dans ma famille, dans mes plus tendres affections, je déclare, au nom du Christ mort sur la croix, que je n'ai ni colère ni besoin de vengeance, et que j'efface le nom du meurtrier de ma mémoire, et que j'ensevelis son action abominable dans l'éternelle silence de la tombe.¹

'Rome,' however, is something more than literature : it is a novel with a purpose. This purpose is to show that Catholicism is dead : that a veritable *genius loci* attaching to the historic soil of Rome has made the Popes the spiritual heirs of the Cæsars, and animated them with the fantastic and impossible ambition of universal rule ; that in virtue of this succession the Church is pledged to an attitude of absolute intransigence in the face of modern life and the modern spirit ; and is destined, in consequence, like Nineveh and Babylon, like Thebes and Memphis, sooner or later, but inevitably, to pass away. Granted the permanence of this attitude, the conclusion is inevitable ; the world does not go back. And it must be admitted that it is not easy to imagine its abandonment ; Rome is indisposed to compromise on what she considers essentials, and does not willingly admit change. But to confine our view to actual Catholicism is misleading. An outlook over history suggests larger possibilities ; behind the Papacy lies the Church, behind the Church Christianity ; and 'das Christentum ist das Allerveränderlichste : das ist sein besonderer Ruhm.'²

It is improbable that M. Zola had read Hobbes ; but, had he done so, he could hardly have found an apter motto for his 'Rome' than the famous description of the Papacy as 'the "ghost" of the deceased Roman Empire sitting crowned upon the grave thereof.' The hereditary pride of race and rule, inbred as in the Cæsar so in the humblest legionary, as in the Pontiff so in Tito, the boy workman with his haughty

¹ *Rome*, p. 576.

² R. Rothe, *Stille Stunden*.

'Io son' Romano di Roma'¹—this is the thread worked into the book from the first page to the last. It is the key to the history of that great politico-ecclesiastical institution the Papacy. History shows us two institutions, and two only, which have claimed and exercised jurisdiction in every place and over all men; to which, therefore, an œcumenical signification attaches: the one was the Roman Empire, the other is the Roman Church. And there is a sense in which the two are one, in which the Empire survives in the Papacy, Pagan in Christian Rome. The fact and the consciousness of this universality of charge have imprinted from the first a note, or special character, on the Church to which it pertains—the note of government, inherent, as has been said, in the very soil of the Eternal City. The saying of Hobbes had its prototype in the 'Tu regere imperio populos' of the poet. This has been the maxim of the Popes, as of the Cæsars; the distinctive faculty, or function, of Rome is authority: the *potior principalitas*—neither more nor less—is her claim:—

Others, belike, with happier grace
From bronze or stone shall call the face.
Plead doubtful causes, map the skies,
And tell when planets set and rise;
But, Roman, thou, do thou control
The nations far and wide:
Be this thy genius, to impose
The rule of peace on vanquished foes,
Show pity to the humbled soul,
And crush the sons of pride.²

Certain defects go with certain qualities; this temper, lofty as it is, has limitations on more than one side. The generals and statesmen of Rome, Republican and Imperial, looked with a touch of contempt on the arts of peace, on letters, on philosophy, on the religious enthusiasm of the Hebrew, on the nimble brain and quick hand of the Greek: their modern representatives, the prefects of the great Roman Congregations, the canonists and law officers of the Curia, the Nuncios at foreign courts, the permanent official

¹ *Rome*, p. 334.

² *Æneid*, vi. 847 ff. (Professor Conington's translation).

staff which from the centre of Christendom directs, organises, and administers the various national and local Churches, are impatient of the fog-bound northern mind, with its visions half seen and its aspirations half realised. This mind is to theirs as a Gothic cathedral, dim, vast, many-vistad, to a hypæthral temple—small, compact, perfectly proportioned, the whole in full view. To them everything is distinct, sharply defined, clear-cut : they are intolerant of the haze on the horizon which Nature is never without in thought or in landscape ; they make small account of abstractions, of the indefinite, of the unpractical—as they conceive it—in a word, of ideas. They know exactly what they want, and the means—in the choice of which they are not very scrupulous—best calculated to attain it ; they do not trouble themselves about the unattainable, about what lies beyond. They take essentially short views ; hence at once their strength and their weakness : strength for the moment, weakness for all that lies beyond its immediate requirements. For the abstract of to-day is the concrete of to-morrow ; ideas, fanciful and incapable of realisation as they appear in their earlier stages, do, in fact, take shape, come to maturity, inspire and move men. But the *esprit moyen* of Rome by temperament and policy alike holds aloof from them. Rome is not, and has never been, a school of learning, even of theological learning, as were Antioch and Alexandria in early days, Bologna and Padua, Paris and Oxford in the Middle Ages : with few and far between exceptions it would be difficult to point to any literature above the rank of textbooks for seminarists to which it has given birth. Its work has all along been positive, not speculative : not to teach, though, strangely enough, it acts as a court of final appeal in matters of doctrine, but to judge and legislate ; not research, but rule. The focus of the ecclesiastical world, it forms a little world by itself : a world singularly concentrated, singularly inaccessible to outside influences ; a strange complex of contradictions—energetic, yet slow of movement ; rigid, yet elastic ; persistent, yet vacillating ; with a show of breadth, yet intensely narrow ; with ramifications on every continent and among every

people, yet local, limited, and self-centred beyond belief. There were mediæval mystics who saw in it the Babylon of the Apocalypse, to whom the Curia, the hierarchy, the whole exterior polity of Christendom seemed of anti-Christ, not of Christ. The enthusiast for ideas, for knowledge, for religion, is chilled by its atmosphere ; by a temper so sober, so severely practical, so circumspect, so habitually averse to extremes. For, paradoxical as it may appear, the temper of Rome is the reverse of fanatical. Where it appears to be so it is due to a defect in the working of the system ; a question addressed or a denunciation made to a Congregation, if it gets beyond a certain stage, works automatically, because the machinery is antiquated and inelastic ; aware of this the authorities, with rare exceptions, discourage questions and denunciations. ‘*Quieta non movere*’ is their motto ; they want, if possible, to let things alone. Their influence is cast, on the whole, on the side of moderation. They can make use, indeed, of enthusiasts, when it suits their purpose to do so ; but of all things enthusiasm is the most alien to them. Ideas, as such, they instinctively dislike and distrust ; to knowledge they are indifferent ; religion they employ as a means to an end. There have been learned Popes, but one can scarcely imagine a Clement of Alexandria or a Gregory Nazianzen the successor of St. Peter ; there have been saintly Popes, but it is difficult to picture a Francis of Assisi or a Philip Neri in the Papal chair. Those, perhaps, have been the greatest Popes who have best assimilated the distinctively Roman spirit, with its legalism, its love of routine, its antipathy to what is doctrinaire or theoretical, its looking to the good of the whole, as it conceives it, rather than to that of the part, its refusal—so incomprehensible to minds cast in another mould—to anticipate matters, to deal with, or even to forecast, the problems of to-morrow. Opportunism, touched by genius, and raised to the level of a fine art—this is the *Leitmotif* of the whole. He on whom the solicitude for all the Churches falls must observe times and seasons ; must practise reserve, self-suppression, economy ; must let the office limit and restrain the man. Do we envy those in high

place ? Oh, irony of human things ! It is they who, from a personal standpoint, have reason to envy us ; they are less free to live their lives, to act, to speak, to think and feel even than we. And of all men, perhaps, the Pope is the least his own master, the least able to act on his own initiative, and as his judgment, his inclination, his conscience direct. For the Pope is not Rome. Behind the individual Pontiff lies the system—the impersonal bureaucracy with its traditions, its routine, its fixed methods and procedure. Ministers come and go ; the permanent staff continues : Popes pass ; the Curia remains. From the first the prerogative of St. Peter attached rather to the Church of Rome than to the Roman bishop. The Vatican is a prison, the Pope is a prisoner ; but his gaolers are not his enemies, but his friends.

Ahi, Constantin, di quanto mal fu matre,
Non la tua conversion, ma quella dote
Che da te prese il primo ricco patre !¹

The Roman question is the leprosy of Catholicism—an open sore, draining away its life. More than once in the course of his long pontificate has Leo XIII shown an inclination to attempt its solution ; Abbot Tosti's famous pamphlet is believed to have been submitted to and approved by him before publication ; but in each instance reactionary influences have been too strong for him ; the blessing promised to the peacemakers is reserved for another than he. The Temporal Power is a field on which the characteristic features of Roman diplomacy have displayed themselves in their most characteristic forms ; the policy of the Vatican has been at once astute and short-sighted, crafty and fatuous, a laborious spinning of cobwebs which a breath blows away. From 1849 to 1870 Antonelli played France against Sardinia with the skill of a gambler, and so postponed the inevitable for twenty years. He did not consider the harvest of hatred that he was sowing in Italy and throughout Europe : perhaps he did not regard it ; but Catholicism has reaped, and is reaping, it to the full. Since

¹ *Inferno*, xix. 115.

1870 the same policy has been pursued with a tenacity and perseverance worthy of a better cause ; it has been the supreme end to which other ends have been deliberately sacrificed ; it has been the underlying motive of every act and utterance of the Holy See. 'All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.' But the promise is deceitful ; the price has been paid in vain. A European war would have been welcomed at any time during the last thirty years by the partisans of the Papacy on the off-chance that a redistribution of territory at its close might restore what were once the States of the Church to their former ruler ; the presence of foreign bayonets on Italian soil would have been acclaimed with enthusiasm so that they propped up the tottering throne of the Vicar of Christ. With this end in view France has been flattered and cajoled ; Austria, as a member of the Triple Alliance, slighted ; Italy materially and morally weakened ; the red fool fury of anti-Semitism roused and fostered ; brigandage in Naples and Calabria connived at ; anarchism at Milan rebuked with bated breath. It was exceedingly clever, but it was exceedingly wanting in foresight ; there will be, there is, a Nemesis for these things.

The general result has been the secularisation of the temper and aims of the Papacy. Everything—theology, religion, the needs of the Church as a spiritual organisation—is treated as matter of policy and with a view to the influence, however remote, that it may conceivably or inconceivably exercise on the all-important question of the temporal power. 'When,' asked a cynical prelate, 'shall we have a Pope who will have time to occupy himself with religion ?' The Curia, absorbed in this one idea, has neither leisure nor inclination to take other interests into account ; it minds earthly things. The consequences of this are far-reaching. A spiritual society does not substitute the material for the spiritual with impunity : this is to do violence to the law of its being. The antagonism between religion and knowledge has seldom been more marked than in modern Catholicism ; hence its intellectual and moral impoverishment. The attitude of the Pontiff to

the new Rome finds a parallel in that of the Church to the modern mind : Pontiff and Church alike sit apart in self-imposed isolation, speaking to men in unaccustomed accents and a strange tongue. Theological science is non-existent, because thought and its expression are fettered ; the few Catholic *Gelehrte*—a Schell, an Ehrhardt, a Loisy—work in chains. Scholarship is suspect ; research stifled : the fear of the 'Index' and the Inquisition lies over all. This means more than merely intellectual stagnation ; because, in the last resort, intellectual and moral virtue are one. The indifference, not to say hostility, to truth involved in the Church's attitude to knowledge reacts on character ; nor can piety, as such, be relied on as an antiseptic ; without enlightenment it degenerates too easily into superstition, without unction into fanaticism : the *bonus odor Christi*¹ disappears. At no time and in no religious communion could such symptoms be viewed without anxiety, but in the case of the Roman Church her lofty claims and the circumstances of the time in which we live give it special significance. An infallible Church cannot afford to show herself fallible ; nor does Catholicism lie outside the contemporary movement of thought and feeling known as Liberalism.

Non obtunsa adeo gestamus pectora Pœni,
Nec tam aversus equos Tyriâ Sol jungit ab urbe.²

It is stirred to the depths by it ; on its power of dealing with and assimilating it its future as a Church hangs. There will be no second Reformation ; the time has gone by for founding new Churches. But indifference and unbelief are more effective solvents than open revolt. They may go with nominal assent and exterior submission ; but where this is so the springs of life are poisoned : religion, while having the name of being alive, is dead.

The Church, however, has escaped so many seemingly imminent dangers in the course of her long history that she may escape this also. She represents so large a portion of humanity that it is difficult to conceive her definitely and

¹ 2 Corinthians ii. 15.

² *Æneid*, i. 567.

permanently stultifying herself : she does advance, though she advances slowly and with backward gaze.

Nous ne désespérons pas, vu les progrès croissants des sciences morales et historiques, que la critique n'amène peu à peu la théologie à ouvrir ses textes aux principales conclusions qu'elle a posées, toujours grâce aux mêmes procédés de libre interprétation. De même que la théologie accepte le mouvement de la terre, la période neptunienne et les déluges partiels, la théorie des époques de la création, l'immensité des cieux peuplés d'un nombre infini de mondes solaires, en faisant remarquer que la sagesse divine a dû descendre à la portée des premiers hommes et leur parler un langage qu'ils pussent comprendre, de même ne pourrait-elle accepter un jour, d'aussi bonne grâce, certaines explications historiques et psychologiques de la critique touchant les symboles, les mythes et les mystères de la foi ?¹

This, however, will not come about without fermentation and conflict ; and the Papacy is not seen at its best in dealing with ideas. Will it renew its youth ? or is it destined like the Patriarchates of the East and the Metropolitan Sees, once so prominent in Christendom, to fall into the background, surviving, *magni nominis umbra*, a shadow of its former self ? 'Its practical claims and action may vary in the future as they have varied in the past. . . . We can probably as little prophesy what changes might occur in the position of the Papacy as Catholics could in the fourteenth century have guessed the vast changes which have already come about in its practical position since that time.'² Nor were mediæval theologians wanting who cut the Gordian knot after a fashion that would scarcely commend itself to modern apologists. 'According to the theory of Occam . . . both General Councils and Popes may err. . . . The Primacy, and hierarchical institutions in general, are not necessary or essential to the subsistence of the Church ; and the forms of the ecclesiastical as of

¹ Vacherot, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, July 15, 1868.

² W. Ward, *Life and Times of Cardinal Wiseman*, ii. 582.

the political constitution ought to vary with the varying needs of the time.¹ Be this as it may, the times are critical ; Rome, it seems, is at the parting of the ways. It is open to the Papacy to make itself the mouthpiece of a mediæval sect, narrow, dogmatic, intolerant ; or of a world-Church co-extensive with mankind, and embracing the entire human inheritance of knowledge and sympathy.

At present, perhaps, it realises this imperfectly. Its temper is secular rather than religious : the ends that it pursues are material ; it forgets that the outward in religion exists for the sake of the inward, the latter for its own. This is so in civil as well as in religious society. The State has an executive, an army, the machinery of government, a sovereign, the pomp and circumstance of a court. But it does not consist in those things ; its essence is the free and orderly development of the nation's life. Were it otherwise the community of the future would be anarchic, and rightly ; the State as we know it would be doomed. So with religion. A Church whose essence was the priest would be no less a moral horror than a State whose essence was the hangman. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink ; neither ritual nor dogma ; neither Presbytery, nor Episcopacy, nor the Papacy. For religion does not consist in those things ; rather between it and them there is an insuperable, if at times latent, element of antagonism : lay stress upon them, and religion, like some subtle essence, evaporates and disappears. Clothes at best, they may become grave-clothes, impediments to freedom and movement, to be discarded by the living—' Loose him and let him go.'

As ' Lourdes ' is a criticism of religion, and ' Rome ' of the Church as represented by the Papacy, so is ' Paris ' of civil society, of the modern State. The book is of less interest than the other two, and that for two reasons : first, because its criticism has been to a certain extent anticipated in them ; and secondly, because, social questions being more familiar to the average man—and it is for the average man, as has been said, that M. Zola writes—than religious or ecclesiastical, this criticism has not the attraction of novelty.

¹*Pastor's History of the Popes*, i. 76.

Reaction has been tried and found wanting ; whatever may be the remedy for the sins and shortcomings of the world we live in, it is not to be found here. Perhaps M. Zola hardly proposes a definite remedy. 'C'est là, enfin, la nouvelle espérance, la justice, après dix-huit siècles de charité impuissante'¹—this is to take refuge in generalities ; we want at once less and more. What is justice ? asks Plato in the 'Republic.' M. Zola does not put the question ; but it must be answered before much can be accomplished in the way of reform. His power of delineation is as marked as before ; the book is a panorama of Paris—all-embracing, graphic, full of movement. And its large human sympathy is inspiring ; they must be very callous or very thoughtless to whom this does not appeal. But sympathy divorced from knowledge, like the *vis consili expers* of the poet, *mole ruit sua* : it replaces one wrong by another ; the last state of the society in which it had its way unchecked would be worse than the first. Salvat's bomb kills not the financier, but the errand-girl, the child of the people ; the attempt on the Basilica of Montmartre, had it been successful, would have scattered death in its cruelest form over a mixed multitude of poor. Society may, and must, defend itself against such outrages : sympathy with the Salvats, the Mathis, the Janzens is out of place. 'Paris' is not, indeed, as a whole written in this vein ; the unhealthy sentiment referred to is corrected by the strong sense of the young Normalien François, and by the sanity and equilibrium of the scientists Bertheroy and Bache :—

Je n'ai que mépris pour les agitations vaines de la politique, aussi bien la révolutionnaire que la conservatrice. . . . Un pas de la science avance plus l'humanité vers la cité de justice et de vérité que cent ans de politique et de révolte sociale. Allez, elle seule balaye les dogmes, emporte les dieux, fait de la lumière et du bonheur. . . . C'est moi, le membre de l'Institut, renté, décoré, qui suis le seul révolutionnaire.²

For there is a process in things independent of our will or

¹ *Paris*, p. 596.

² *Ibid.*, p. 143.

liking ; a growth in the world and mankind which we are powerless to check or stay.

‘Bah ! qu’ils se dévorent !’ says Guillaume, when taunted with the insincerity of place-hunting politicians ; ‘ils ne se battent guère que sur des questions de personnes, dans l’âpre ambition de régner, de disposer de l’argent et de la puissance. Mais ça n’empêche pas l’évolution de se faire, les idées de s’épandre, et les événements de s’accomplir. Il y a, par-dessus, l’humanité qui marche.’¹

Against this mighty onward sweep of tendency movements, reactionary or anarchic, break in vain. Nor is the advance material only : aspiration is higher, insight clearer, feeling deeper, judgment more righteous ; the level of life is raised. The most significant events in history are not those which attract most notice : rather these come about imperceptibly, and while men sleep. A European war, the substitution of one dynasty or form of government for another, the rise of some new school of literature or art, how large such things bulk before the imagination ! People talk and think of nothing else for the time being ; the press is full of them ; they absorb the public mind. Yet the real life of the world is comparatively unaffected by them ; the surface waters are troubled, the depths remain unmoved. A truth of science, on the other hand, an induction from facts of observation or experience, makes little outward stir. It matures silently in the mind of a student, it is discussed by experts, tested, sifted, scrutinised, till, finally, it passes into the common stock of knowledge. The fabric, slow-rising, but massive in its consistency, receives a permanent addition ; there is no going back on what has been once gained. There is nothing showy or striking in this ; the pedantry of science, her colourlessness, her lack of insight, have furnished point to many a sneer. She need not be very careful to answer these charges. If, as a poet reminds us, the Muse is more austere, the austere figure of Science is perhaps more musical than we conceive her ; and, for the rest, ‘s’il est devenu banal que deux et deux font quatre,

¹ *Paris*, p. 591.

pourtant ils font bien quatre. Le dire, cela est encore moins sot et moins fou que de croire, par exemple, aux miracles de Lourdes.' ¹

The direction in which the world is moving is unmistakable. The practice among apologists of a certain type of clutching, like drowning men, at every straw is as futile as it is undignified; the fragile support, unable to bear the strain put upon it, breaks in the hand. Much has been made of late of the revival of mysticism in certain unexpected quarters, and of the famous cry of the bankruptcy of science, raised in the first instance by a distinguished man of letters, and taken up by persons of lesser note in the world of religious and semi-religious journalism. Mysticism is a plant that flourishes on various soils and under various surroundings. There is the mysticism of the 'Imitation' and there is the mysticism of the Sufis; there are depths beyond and below. A slight acquaintance with the literature of the subject is sufficient to show to what type that recently revived in Paris approximates: its prophet is M. Huysmans; its *Ur-Evangelium* 'Là Bas.'

Voici le satanisme, l'occultisme, toutes les aberrations qui fleurissent. . . . Aux fruits l'arbre n'est-il pas jugé? et au lieu d'une renaissance, d'un profond mouvement social, ramenant le passé, n'est-il pas évident que nous assistons simplement à une réaction transitoire, que bien des causes expliquent? ²

The bankruptcy of science is more discussed in literary and theological than in scientific circles. The phrase itself is a *réclame*, and suggests the tradesman whose best goods are in his window. Look close; there is not much behind. Literature works above, science below ground; literature addresses itself to the imagination, science to the understanding; literature is quick, science slow—this is about what it comes to. There is a fashion in these things. Positivism, which had become over-definite, and gave out more light than heat, invited reaction; and reaction came.

¹ *Paris*, p. 195.

² *Ibid.*, p. 200.

But it was, and is, superficial ; it does not touch those who look at the matter from within.

Quant à mes camarades de la section scientifique . . . le néocatholicisme, le mysticisme, l'occultisme, et toutes ces fantasmagories de la mode ne les troublent guère. Ils n'en sont pas à faire une religion de la science, ils restent très ouverts au doute, mais ce sont pour la plupart des esprits très clairs, très nets et très fermes, passionnés de la certitude, tout au zèle de l'enquête, dont l'effort se continue au travers du vaste champ des connaissances humaines. . . . Allez leur parler, à ceux-là, de la banqueroute de la science : ils hausseront les épaules, car ils savent bien que jamais la science n'a enflammé plus de cœurs ni fait de plus prodigieuses conquêtes. Qu'on les ferme donc, les écoles, les laboratoires, les bibliothèques, qu'on change profondément le sol social, alors seulement on pourra craindre d'y voir repousser l'erreur, si douce au cœurs faibles, au cerveaux étroits.¹

Phrases will not serve ; the ground must be ploughed deeper ; we must get down to the real.

Here, however, M. Zola fails as completely as M. Brunetière. He sees and describes the surface of things admirably : hence his power ; for life is lived, for the most part, on the surface. But he possesses sight rather than insight ; the substance of things, their inner tendencies, the world of to-morrow shaping itself in that of to-day—these he does not see. Hence the impression left on the reader is one of superficiality and limitation. Religion is an Illusion, because it contains an element of myth ; the Church a Survival, because the Papacy is an anachronism ; the State a Tyranny, because poverty, inequality, injustice abound. To reason in this way is to want better bread than is made with wheat : treasure in earthen vessels is the law of our condition ; there is an alloy of imperfection inseparable from human things. Religion, the Church, Civil Society are indefinitely larger than M. Zola conceives them : they are more complex and many-sided ; their roots strike deeper into the past and into human nature ; their future

¹ *Paris*, p. 197.

embraces vaster and more vaster possibilities than he dreams of. To argue from them as they are here and now is to take a number for the series into which it enters. They are facts and outcomes of human nature in its entirety, and must be viewed from this standpoint ; it is as vain to endeavour to extirpate as it is to stereotype them : they have always been, and they have been always changing ; they are, they will be ; but they change, and they will continue to change. This point of view does not lend itself to rhetoric, or subserve the interests of religious or political party ; it solves few, if any, of the questions which perplex us ; its answer, when these are put to or pressed upon it, is, and must be, for the most part, ' I do not know.' For there are many things of which we must be content to remain ignorant ; with regard to which knowledge is given to us in outline only—the detail is not filled in. Again, over and above certain technical studies in history and philosophy, it presupposes what is called a liberal education ; the sense of proportion, the power of comparison, the faculty of estimating the nature and value of evidence : hence it is in a sense esoteric, and inaccessible to the uneducated or half-educated—in a word, to the average man. That this is so is, probably, the chief difficulty that religion has to meet in our time. For religion, though to be distinguished from, is, in the concrete, intimately associated with theology ; and to accept the traditional theology in any real sense a certain power of drawing distinctions, of philosophising, is necessary. While the number of well-informed persons—and to these its inadequacy is palpable—is increasing daily, philosophers are, and are likely to remain, few. Hence an intolerable strain and tension. ' Entre la religion inintelligente et le matérialisme brutal, âme poétique et pure, où serait ta place ? ' There is no royal road out of the *impasse* ; step by step the upward path must be trodden : no one can do our thinking for us ; we must think and feel each for himself and alone. But if the experience of the past has any lesson it is this : that short cuts are to be distrusted ; that direct and simple methods lead us, in the long run, astray. Lucidity is a good ; but it is so relatively to the

subject-matter: this admits of it more or less according to its character; the most valid standpoint is not necessarily that which the average man most readily grasps. To forget this is the besetting sin of the French intellect. Its thought is logical; its language perspicuous: and herein, in dealing with the things of mind, lies a twofold snare. A French writer of repute, the story goes, interviewed Hegel, and asked that philosopher to put before him a succinct account of the Hegelian system. 'Monsieur,' was the answer, 'ces choses ne se disent pas succinctement—surtout en français.'

IX. EVOLUTION AND THE CHURCH

A GOOD many years ago, when the English press was disturbed by one of its periodical scares at the prospect of a Russian advance in Central Asia, Lord Salisbury advised the panic-mongers to send for a large map. His meaning was not that the defence of the Indian frontier was a matter of indifference, but that the danger was less imminent than they supposed. There was reason, there is always reason, for precaution; none for alarm. The same holds of religion. Many good men fear for its future. As knowledge advances, faith, it seems to them, recedes. What is gained for the former is lost to the latter; the tide comes up, now clamorous, now silent, but always irresistible, and covers what was once dry land. And, as it rises, the sense of the ideal element in life, they think, becomes atrophied; a practical materialism goes hand in hand with indifference and unbelief.

For this state of mind, in so far as it is distinct from that of the '*laudator temporis acti*'—an attitude which is not peculiar to the old, being a matter less of age than of temperament—there is this apparent justification, that not a few of the beliefs of the past are no longer ours. This fact may be interpreted in one of two ways. It may mean that these beliefs, as such, are dead or dying. Such has been the lot of beliefs so ancient and so widely spread as those in witchcraft and in astrology; we have outgrown them; they have simply disappeared. Or it may mean that the ideas for which they stand are undergoing a process of transformation preparatory to entering upon a new and fuller life. For a religious belief is a

complex, often a highly complex, whole. It takes form and gathers accretions from the various strata of civilisation and thought through which it passes; the reason being that it is not an abstract idea, but a concrete mental fact, existing under definite conditions, in a particular environment, and in the consciousness of individual men who occupy the standpoint of their time and place. Its content, therefore, is variable. It is not easy to recognise the later in the earlier stages, or to predict the future development from the shape in which it appears to-day. Take, for example, the belief in a future life. It is a long way from the thin shades of Homer, or the race-continuity of the Old Testament, to the notion of personal and individual immortality. And now, it seems, this too is breaking up under the pressure of interior contradiction, and revealing a larger conception. To many, individual immortality presents itself as a side only, and that a subordinate side, of the future that awaits us. It is possible, they think, that, while retaining all that is worth retaining in the individual self, all without which this self would become as if it were not and had never been, the individual may be merged in the whole—in God, in man, and in Nature—as a drop in the ocean, penetrated and penetrating. Such a conception does not destroy that of personal immortality, it completes it. Sown in weakness, the original belief is raised in power. The earlier stages lead up to and must be judged by the later; they stand to it as the seedling to the tree.

So with the rest. With regard at least to vital truths, it is their form, not their substance, that is changing; the persistence of force holds in thought as in things. And while it is true that this change is accompanied by risk and open to misconception, that in some it produces perplexity and in others an uncertainty which too easily passes into unbelief, these states of mind are passing. The large map is the corrective. When we look away from the small issues and interests of contemporary controversy to the larger field of history, the conviction grows upon us that we need not be afraid. A premature, indeed,

may be as mischievous as an outgrown synthesis ; there are times when the truest wisdom is to know how to wait. But a survey of the past shows that the ideas, the feelings, and the activities which constitute and are the outcome of religion are part of our nature ; that in one shape or another they have been with us from the beginning till now. And this necessarily, for they spring from the constitution of the mind and its relation to its environment ; from its consciousness both of what is—the limit—and of what ought to be—the limit overcome. In the opposition between these poles their reconciliation is already given, though implicitly, and as a truth of anticipation rather than of demonstration ; as immediate experience to be elaborated in life and mind. It acquires colour, form, and content as generation succeeds generation ; but it is present all along in consciousness, and can only be overlooked or misinterpreted in so far as our analysis of consciousness is at fault. It is no doubt conceivable that the universe as known to us is mirage and phantasmagoria ; that Nature, our own human nature included, is designed to mislead and deceive us. If a man insists that this is so, we cannot disprove it by reasoning ; ‘*solvitur ambulando*’ is the only argument by which he can be met. But it is sufficient. By its working in history and in experience we judge that the religious instinct, not indeed in its relative and necessarily imperfect manifestations, whether of earlier or later date, but in itself, as underlying and struggling with these limitations towards complete expression and actuality, at once posits itself and postulates its object. Pragmatism justifies the thought judgment ; the real is the rational, and the rational the real.

Professor Pfleiderer’s death in an honoured and honourable old age recalls labours for the advancement of religion and learning begun in early life and continued to the end. The ideas which he represented have suffered a temporary eclipse. Other conceptions, complementary rather than conflicting, have come into prominence, for truth is many-sided, and perhaps from no one standpoint can it be surveyed as a whole. But in ‘*Christentum und Religion*’ there is

neither retreat nor uncertainty. The view held in youth is retained in age, and set forth with the vigour of maturity; the mind is stronger as the physical forces decay. The ground idea is the unity of the religious consciousness; the questions of to-day are inseparable from those of the past, and from the larger problems of psychology and speculative thought in general; the world, whether of fact or idea, is one. The hard-and-fast lines of demarcation, which we so easily take as absolute, are in truth relative. We use them on the surface of life; and, as the greater part of our life is lived on the surface, they impose themselves upon us as authoritative and final. They are neither the one nor the other; variable and varying, they exist for thought, not in things. Midday, indeed, is light, and midnight dark. But what shall we say of dawn, or twilight? We cannot assign them definitely either to light or darkness; it is matter of relation and degree. So of religious beliefs and practices. Are they true or false, good or evil? How often it is impossible to answer by a simple yes or no! The question is too complex for so summary a solution; the colours are mixed. And our choice lies not between good and evil—that were easy—but between rival and apparently conflicting goods; not between truth and falsehood—else who could hesitate?—but between truths which we do not see our way to combine. Neither is complete; but each, it seems, has claims upon us; hence perplexity. The lesson being tolerance, a large appreciation, a readiness to put the best, which is generally the truest, construction on men and things. Particularly should this be so in the subject-matter under consideration. None of the many forms of religion is adequate either in itself or in its working. None, for all that, fails in its measure to reflect its object, to sustain, enlighten, and inspire.

To this conception of the unity of religion and religious experience Professor Pfleiderer adds that of its evolution; here, as elsewhere, an interior necessity determines the process of things. And this process is from less to more, each stage being conditioned by the past and conditioning the future; no place for the arbitrary, the non-natural,

is left. If this holds in history, as it holds generally in science, then—

at no particular point can the Absolute intervene emancipated from the universal law which subjects all that is included in the process of becoming to the conditions of time and space. Least of all can such an intervention take place at the opening of the series, when the new growth which is shaping itself is naturally most encumbered by and most embedded in the old, and consequently exhibits its differentiating features in their least distinctive form.¹

This theory, which is identified with the name of F. C. Baur, gave in its time a new direction to theological thought. It is not too much to say that what Kepler and Copernicus did for astronomy, Baur and the Tübingen school did for the history of the Church and of dogma. Of late years, as has been said, its influence has been less marked. It was felt, not without reason, that the use made of it was at times arbitrary; that there was a perceptible tendency among those who adopted it to fit the facts to the theory rather than the theory to the facts. The results obtained by a detailed examination of the sources led to the growth of a distinctively historical school in which positive science replaced speculation, and a distrust of formula—which seemed, in the last resort, little more than a way, one of many possible ways, of putting things—prevailed. Of this school Ritschl and Harnack are the principal representatives. In the case of the latter it is too much to speak of the ‘old Protestant theory of the deterioration and apostasy,’ or of the ‘decline and secularisation of Christianity.’ He expressly disclaims this pathological account of the matter;² and his conception of the inevitableness of the historical development of the Church and of dogma approaches, on the one hand, the Tübingen theory, and on the other, that put forward by M. Loisy in his famous ‘L’Évangile et l’Église.’ Just as little can we accept Wernle’s summary rejection of the Hegelian philosophy of religion—‘Welche Kluft trennt die konkreten Phänomene

¹ Pfleiderer, *Christentum und Religion*, ii. 7.

² ‘Pathologisch ist hier nichts,’ *Dogmengeschichte*, iii., Preface to 3rd edition.

von jenem sublimen "Wesen der Religion"!—or, contrasting the older *Dogmatik* of Pfleiderer or Biedermann with the later work of Troeltsch in the same field, describe the latter as 'völlig anders orientierte.'¹ To accentuate differences of method and standpoint to this extent is to forget the substantial unity of aim and thought. Hegelianism, if a particular, was a uniquely inspiring and inspired reading of and generalisation from facts. Of such generalisations, as of the several perspectives which they represent, it may be said that all are at once false and true. None, that is to say, is exhaustive; none, on the other hand, fails to present an aspect, often an essential aspect, of the truth.

It was so in the case of Baur's epoch-making theory. Fifty years have passed since his death; and in detail—how could it be otherwise?—he has been corrected. No one to-day regards the Mark Gospel as a secondary source of the Synoptic tradition; no one who ascribes the Epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Corinthians to Paul questions the substantial authenticity of that to the Philippians. 'Baur's grasp was firmer on standpoint than on persons,' says Jülicher. 'He regarded Christian origins too exclusively from one side; his knowledge of the Judaism from which the Apostolic Church emerged was insufficient.'² Here men like Weizsäcker and H. J. Holtzmann have supplemented his teaching; but the decisive step of placing New Testament criticism on the footing of scientific history was taken by Baur. The reproach of speculation, of philosophising, breaks down. In vain would we rid ourselves of the element of speculation. Thought is thought; a philosophical theory, consciously or unconsciously held, underlies the simplest statement of the most rudimentary fact. But the positive writers referred to were led by a reaction against theorising to distrust theory; their endeavour was to confine themselves so far as possible to history conceived as a mere narrative of events. And the lessons both of history and

¹ *Einführung in das theologische Studium*, pp. 290, 328.

² *Die Schriften der N.T.*; p. 30.

their own religious experience taught them to look back to the first period of the Christian community as its golden age, to go behind the Churches to Christ. Now, by a similar recoil, speculation is coming back strengthened by a natural reaction against the one-sided positivism which refused it the right of citizenship to which it was entitled. It is impossible to resist the argument for Baur's theory. We may take exception to the manner in which this or that writer of the school applies it ; but in thought, as in society, there can be no exemption from the common law. As Pfleiderer says :—

In the face of all contradiction—and, for the time being, the weight of opinion is on the other side—I am convinced that, sooner or later, theology must reconcile itself to the consistent admission and logical application of the evolution theory in the province of Biblical and ecclesiastical history. It is only on this condition that it can stand on the level of the other sciences, in which this advance has already been made, and share in their progress. Nor are the interests of religion compromised by a method which, like the spear of legend, heals the wounds which it inflicts. It frees the mind, indeed, from the fetters of tradition, inasmuch as it resolves the formulas and institutions of the past into products conditioned by the age in which they originated, and into factors of the evolutionary process of their time. But, foreign as they are to the mind of to-day, it recognises their relative validity and justification as stages in the ascent of the spirit of man from bondage to nature, to freedom in God, and so claims for them respect and reverence.¹

Thus dogmatism is broken not against a rival dogmatism, but against the reason in things which selects, combines, eliminates, and rises by successive stages of its own dialectic to fuller expression and consciousness of self. The danger to which this view of history is open is that of ignoring, or at least minimising, the factor of personality. When Wernle quotes these very words of Pfleiderer as a 'Musterbeispiel für den Mangel des Sinns für originales persönliches Leben in der Geschichte,'² the

¹ Pfleiderer, *Christentum und Religion*, ii. 7.

² *Einführung in das theologische Studium*, pp. 69, 166.

criticism, severe as it is, is not without justification. Events are neither machine-made products determined by the apparatus of the universe in which they take place, nor the unsubstantial play of abstract categories materialising themselves momentarily on the screen of perception to bring about the time-and-space realisation of a preconceived world-plan. Environment is to personality what the scene is to the actor. The latter conditions, even more than he is conditioned; he dominates, transmutes, moulds. The main task of the historian, therefore, is the understanding, not of the environment of his period, necessary as this is, but of the personalities at work in it; in Israel the prophets, in Christianity Jesus and Paul. Here, not there, are the springs of action, the sources of life and thought. The element of the marvellous in which such men move need not surprise us. There could be no greater miscalculation than to measure their consciousness by our own. At a certain altitude the conditions of life change; the abnormal of one sphere is the normal of another, the exception the rule. This is the explanation of that core of wonder which it is impossible to eliminate from the Gospel record. This wonder is relative. It is not easy to render the facts of a wider in the terms of a narrower experience; the marvel of the lower is the routine of the higher plane.

With regard to the general view, one caution must be entered. The evolution theory of which we are speaking must be applied on a universal scale. We go back to Lord Salisbury's large map. Used up to a certain point and no farther, employed to account for a particular series of phenomena and then set aside, the theory is misleading and mischievous; it fell into disrepute just because it was taken up in this way for controversial purposes and made to serve unscientific and party ends. It does not mean passive acquiescence in the existing order, that whatever is is right. The Hegelians of the Right used it in this way as an argument against reform and in favour of Prussian bureaucracy. Newman, in his famous 'Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine,'

brought it into play against Protestantism and in support of Rome. Not all his great gifts could make the argument other than sophistical. He saw clearly enough through Bossuet's thesis of the perpetuity of the faith. Magnificent and imposing as it was, and splendid as was the rhetoric with which the great bishop drove it home, it was not true. The doctrine and discipline of the Catholic Church differed, and differed widely, from those of early Christianity; the gulf between them widened as time went on. The Christian of the first days would find himself at home rather in the Quaker meeting-house or the Salvation Army hall than in the Roman basilica. It is not in the elaborate ceremonial of the Mass, but in the simple Supper of the Reformed Churches that he would recognise the cup of blessing and the bread broken in remembrance of the Lord.

Yet there was a connexion between the upper and the lower waters. The solid fabric of Catholicism had not risen out of nothing; the various stages of its growth could be traced. What was the nature of this connexion? By a stroke of genius Newman hit upon the notion of development, which, while it had fallen out of vogue in favour of the fallacious but plausible conception of identity, was not new in theology, and was coming to the front in speculative science, though a generation was to pass before Darwin and Wallace established it in biology and brought together the proof that raised it from hypothesis to fact. The great Oxford divine elaborated it with characteristic ingenuity. His illustrations were, if not convincing, plausible; his evidence, if not conclusive, was selected and disposed with the greatest skill; and the whole argument was enforced by the appeal to emotion—sensibility, reverence, fear, piety—which none could make with such supreme art as he. The fundamental error was the application to a particular institution—the Roman Church—and a particular set of phenomena—the formation of her doctrine and discipline—of a canon which can only be applied with propriety to society and phenomena as a whole. A survey of this larger field would

have shown that Rome was a survival, a survival indeed on a vast scale, whose dissolution may be the work of centuries, but still a survival; that it was through the Reformation and, despite of appearances, the Illumination of the eighteenth century to the critical, positive, but at heart genuinely religious movement of our own time that the line of development led. The theory must take into account such facts as degeneration or reaction, temporary and local, whether on a greater or smaller scale. How often are these written large in history! To deny or overlook them is to involve ourselves in fallacy and contradiction. Will any ingenuity convince us that the Levitical Law was an advance on the prophetic teaching? or the mediæval hierarchy on the charismatic ministry of the first days of the Church? From the fact that these later growths were not arbitrary, that their sufficient reason is to be found in the circumstances in which they arose, it does not follow that they were legitimate, much less in the line of progress. Nor can we argue to the institutions themselves from the fact that good men have upheld them. Men are better than their opinions; exceptional men rise above them, and move in a higher air. But we cannot reason from this to the average, concluding, say, that because the Psalms are for the most part post-exilic, or because the 'Following of Christ' comes to us from the Middle Ages, these periods are worthy of imitation, or that the one or the other work expresses the temper of the time. All that we are entitled to infer is that the spirit works under conditions the least favourable to its working; that under the roughest bark the sap flows.

Nor is this the only reserve that must be made in the application of the theory to history. In the interests of the former it has too often been thought necessary to represent the teaching of the Christ of the Synoptics as standing on a lower level than that of the later Church. The idealism of the Fourth Gospel has been contrasted with the material and particularist standpoint of the Synoptics, with such sayings as those attributed to our Lord with regard to the permanent obligation of the

law, the eating and drinking in the kingdom, and the non-canonical but not improbably authentic Logion as to the fertility of the earth in the Messianic age—to every vine a thousand clusters, to every cluster a thousand grapes, to every grape a thousand measures of wine. Such contrasts are inconclusive; it would be easy by a similar disposition of the material to set over against the simplicity and directness of the Synoptics the laboured monologue of the Fourth Gospel, or the cloudy theosophy, the perplexed and perplexing Rabbinism of St. Paul. There is a more excellent way. A certain setting of the Christian idea is inevitable. This idea naturalises itself in the society to which it is addressed; only so can the two come into contact. And the Messianic form of the Gospel, necessary for its reception by Palestinian Jews, was alien to, and incapable of assimilation by, the Gentile world; it presupposed men trained in the Old Testament Scriptures and living under the law. The Gospel was—it always is—larger than its actual setting and circumstance. Plato replaced Moses, Aristotle Plato, as necessarily as Kant and Darwin have replaced the scholastic and evidential apologetic of a later day. The spontaneous cohesion of a little group of enthusiasts, waiting for the Coming of the Lord, became impossible when a mixed multitude of converts by circumstance rather than by conviction flocked into what was soon to be a World-Church.

Yet the virtues of mature years are travel-stained. It must be so, perhaps; for they have stood, and must stand, the stress of life. The bloom is off them. Our wisdom borders on disingenuousness, our strength on harshness; seldom does age pursue the even tenour of its way. Though 'Heaven lies about us in our infancy,' the purity and freshness of its morning do not return. The words of Christ possess a quality which is wanting in that of Christians; it is not without reason that from the first the instinctive watchword of piety has been, Back to Christ. The demand for the pure Gospel, it is urged, implies a contradiction. If by a pure Gospel is meant one free from relativity, from the influences of time, place, and environ-

ment, there never was such a Gospel ; there never will or can be. It is in the misconception of the truth contained in this statement that its essential fallacy lies. It is true that a *κένωσις* is implied in the notion of the Incarnation. A God-man possessing at one and the same time two wills and two separate kinds of knowledge, a divine and a human, and using now this, now that, as occasion serves, is at once a figment of theologians and a contradiction in terms. Gloss and tendency in the record apart—and they have to be taken into account—the human element in the words of Christ is beyond question. In their anxiety to claim for Him the divine nature, of which we know little, theologians have taken from Him the human, of which we know much. Their teaching, however, unconsciously, is Docetic ; the humanity which it recognises is apparent not real. But, to avoid Docetism, we need not pass to the opposite error, that of the *ψίλος ἄνθρωπος* ; a real is not a mere man. It is in the *ψίλος* that the fallacy lies. Man, yes ; but ‘we are also his offspring’ ; the *ψίλος ἄνθρωπος* is less than man. The divine and the human are near akin ; we fall short of the former in so far as we miss the latter standard. Christ was perfectly human not in spite of His being, but precisely because He was divine.

But it is not so much on this side that the difficulty lies as in the uniqueness of the manifestation, the new departure, the intervention, it seems, of the non-phenomenal into the phenomenal world. It is in this sense that Christology has become the problem of the Church of to-day, as, viewed from other standpoints, it was of the Church from the fourth to the sixth century. In our efforts to deal with it we shall do well to learn from the experience—may we not say the failures?—of the past. We shall not, if we are wise, import into this mysterious subject-matter the terminology of dead philosophies ; this would be to darken counsel and to explain the obscure by the more obscure. We shall be sparing in our use of the language even of living science, employing it, if at all, by way of illustration rather than of precise statement or definition, remembering that systems of thought are short-lived—

‘the feet of them that buried thy husband are at the door, and they shall carry thee out.’ A wise and good man has written :—

It seems to be an opinion which is gaining ground among thoughtful and religious men that in theology the less we define the better. Definite statements respecting the relation of Christ either to God or man are only figures of speech ; they do not really pierce the clouds which ‘round our little life.’ When we multiply words we do not multiply ideas ; we are still within the circle of our own minds. No greater calamity has ever befallen the Christian Church than the determination of some uncertain things which are beyond the sphere of human knowledge.¹

Bearing this in mind, our attitude with regard to many of the questions that may be put to us will be, in the strict sense of the word, agnostic. We shall teach our tongue to say, I do not know. We shall not profess to answer enigmas. Before attempting to reply to a question, we shall make sure that both we and the inquirers know what the question means. Tried by this test, many of the controversies that have distracted the Church and divided Christians into contending factions are seen to be meaningless ; they dealt with names, not things. And if, even so, we have not succeeded in getting rid of that element of the marvellous which presents so insuperable a difficulty to men of exact thought, jealous of that intellectual veracity which is, in the last resort, inseparable from moral, we shall not regard as opponents those whose attitude towards it differs from our own. The adjustment of such difficulties may be left to time and to the increasing sense of the vastness of the universe. Marvel is not miracle. The scholastic definition of the latter is incapable of verification. Whether or no a particular effect exceeds the sum of the forces of nature can be decided only by an observer who knows those forces exhaustively and can describe their content as a whole. Neither the philosopher nor the man of science pretends to such knowledge. They are less and less ready to reject

¹ Jowett, *The Epistles of St. Paul to the Thessalonians*, &c., ii. 367, 368.

the marvellous as such, in proportion as they are less and less disposed to class it in a category apart. The distinction between natural and supernatural is relative. With the growth of the content of experience and the sense of the surprises which it offers, and has yet to offer us, the recognition of its unity grows. Here, it is safe to say, are the outlines of the future synthesis; for the detail, the evidence, the formula, we must wait.

Here, as in other departments of knowledge, the theory of evolution is at once the suggestion and the explanation of the facts. The order which the mind reads into these is not its own creation; we discern it because it is there to be discerned. And knowledge, in the proper sense of the word, begins with its discernment; perceptions without form have neither significance nor sense. Like the separate pieces of a puzzle, they lie side by side disconnected; it is not till the key is in our hands that they are correlated, take meaning, and fall into place in the scheme of the whole. How hopeless a confusion is presented by the facts of Scripture and Church history taken in isolation! how inconsequent, how contradictory they appear! The clue once found, order replaces disorder; they fall into line. The letters form words, the words sentences; the sentences show the sustained reason that guides the movement of the entire process. The theory that regards the personal teaching of Christ as rudimentary, and sees its significance only in that which it became, must be rejected. Galilee, not Jerusalem or Antioch, is the Christian's fatherland; the age of Christ, his golden age. But Christianity was for all the world and for all time. The baptismal stream from which humanity was to rise a new creature was not fed by Jordan only, its waters were to be augmented by those of the Orontes and the Tiber, the Elbe and the Rhone.

The question of origin, so fiercely discussed by theologians, is in truth the least decisive of questions; the point is not what a formula, a function, an institution was, but what it has become. This, not the other, fixes at once its worth and its character. An ingenious argument is advanced by Professor Pfleiderer for the Gentile origin of

the Christology of St. Paul, of the development of the Sacraments in the Churches of which he was the founder, and of the form taken by the belief in the resurrection of Christ.¹ Such arguments are necessarily conjectural. We can say with greater probability what did not, than what did, take place in the embryonic stage of Christianity. The evidence is circumstantial, and may be construed in more than one way. Of the first eighteen years after the day of Pentecost hardly any record is preserved; it seems as if we had reached the second stage in the history of the Apostolic Church without any knowledge of the first. Of this second period even—the ministry of St. Paul—how fragmentary, how ambiguous are the accounts! The secret of Paulinism perished with its founder. Between Christ and Christianity a gulf is fixed. Much must have, almost anything may have, taken place in this obscure but momentous period. It would be rash to say more of Professor Pfleiderer's hypothesis than that it is possible. But there is nothing in it that need perplex or alarm us. It is the eternal, not the past, that is the object of faith.

Was sich nie und nirgends hat begeben,
Das allein veraltet nie.

If the ideas conveyed under these forms are valid and vital, the forms, as such, need not detain us. They are of secondary importance; those who framed them took them, we may believe, where they lay to hand. St. Paul was as free to borrow from non-Jewish as were the older apostles to borrow from Jewish sources. Gentile and Jewish converts retained, in all probability, not a few of their accustomed usages and forms of thought, but with a difference; they were in each case purified and vitalised, all things were become new. 'Let all things be done unto edifying,' and, 'Where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.' These were the principles which guided the development. It was not till a later age that we find the vehicle stereotyped, the perishing form identified with the imperishable truth.

¹ Pfleiderer, *Christentum und Religion*, i. 160-2; iii. 221-31.

In his summary¹ of the content of the Christian religion, Professor Pfeiderer represents the Gospel as taking over into itself whatever truth was contained in the religion and philosophical systems of the world in which it found itself—in the mystery-cults, in Judaism, in Greek speculation, in the theosophies of the East. 'Thus did Christianity become the religion of the religions; thus did it overcome the old world and bring in the new'; the inference being that its assimilative power is not exhausted, that it may deal as sovereignly and as discriminatingly with modern as it dealt with ancient thought. It is easy, by opposing to so idealised a picture as this certain obvious facts, to make the former appear fanciful and unreal. Consult the large map and the suggested inference breaks down. The actual falls short of the ideal; if we select our instances, we can contrast a Hypatia with a Cyril, a Julian with a Constantine, and build a general view of history on the contrast. We have to look, however, not at individuals, but at a larger field—the movement of humanity, the ideas by which it was directed, and the course which it took. Thus viewed, history justifies itself. This principle holds good not only of the conflict between Christianity and Paganism, but, unless we misread the evidence, of the internal controversies which disturbed the peace and threatened the existence of the early Church. Had Gnosticism, the 'acute hellenising' of Christianity, got its way unchecked, Church and creed bade fair to evaporate. The allegorising stage is common to mythologies in their decadence. When it has set in, there is but a step between them and death. Philo and Plotinus were reproduced in Valentinus and Basilides. It was because Christianity was not a mere mythology that it stood out against their nebulous abstractions. It pointed, indeed, to the eternal—this was, and is, the object of faith—but it held also to the manifestation in time, without which it escapes us, to the concrete embodiment of the idea. From the Alexandrian school all—and it was much—that was worth retaining in Gnosticism passed into Christian theology; which,

¹ Pfeiderer, *Christentum und Religion*, iii. 232.

while resisting an acute, assimilated and was modified by a gradual hellenising. The Gnostics, it has been said, were the first theologians. Clement and Origen show how deeply their influence made itself felt.

The Christological controversies, from the Arian onwards, leave an impression of barrenness. Theology was identified with revelation, a creed with faith. Civilisation and religion suffered. The key to orthodox speculation was its insistence on two apparently contradictory propositions; the key to heretical, its efforts to reconcile them in an ingeniously conceived middle term. It is easier in each case to regret the dispute and its attendant evils than the failure of the attempt at mediation. Toleration, it must be remembered, was unknown; the Arian persecuted the Catholic as fiercely as the Catholic the Arian. And there was probably not one of these attempts whose success, with the consequent crushing out of the rival theology, would not have imperilled what, after all, is the essence of Christianity—the bridging of the gulf between God and man. For the mind of the time—and it is this, not that of a later day, that has to be considered—the doctrine of Arius, of Nestorius, of Eutyches, and the rest, meant in the last resort either the *ψίλος ἄνθρωπος*, a Christ who was a ‘mere’ man, or a God non-incarnate and remote from humanity. Thus the bridge was broken; the chasm yawned unspanned between us and the divine. A price, it is true, had to be paid for its spanning. The importance attached to ‘doubtful disputations,’ the sacrifice of spirit to letter, the loss of the universal priesthood of believers consequent on the development of a sacerdotal caste culminating in the Papacy—these were evils. The New Testament contains no trace of them, and they are as foreign to its spirit as to its text. They stood to Christ as the Levitical Law stands to prophethood; the deterioration is too palpable to be explained away. Yet, given the circumstances, we can see the justification of some such elements as those of which they were an exaggeration—formula, law, organisation, and the like. The false step was not taken till these things were made ends in themselves, and the fiction of apostolicity was

devised to cover their historical origin in the necessities of time and place. This was the *πρώτον ψεύδος* on which the fabric of later Catholicism was to be built.

Yet there is a soul of goodness in things evil. 'It is the attempt to preserve or revive erroneous opinions in the present age, not their existence in former ages, that is to be reprobated.'¹ There is a contingent element in morality; to overlook this is to misread history and to misconstrue life. The hierarchy, unevangelical as it was in conception and fact, was a protection to the Church against exterior attack and interior dissolution; but for the enforced celibacy of the clergy, their benefices would have become hereditary fiefs. The breakdown of the conciliar system which the Councils of Basel and Constance attempted to establish was due to men's natural and proper sense that one theocrat was less intolerable than many. Monasticism met a want which will always be felt by certain temperaments; the confessional was a check upon ill-doing; it broke down the interior solitude which drives so many to despair, and gave sensible assurance of the pardon of sin. To say that these wants may be met in less ambiguous ways is true, but irrelevant. The point is, could they have been, and were they, so met at the period in question? The evidence is all in the other direction. Even in our own time the comparative absence of an alternative remedy is the strength of Catholicism, which thrives less on its own merits than on the defects of rival Churches. It professes at least to meet needs and to cure their ailments. Protestantism is apt to ignore both, presupposing a non-existent sanity. 'They that are whole have no need of a physician.' Hence an apparent aridity which chills and repels.

There can be no greater historical fallacy than the identification of pre-Reformation Catholicism with the highly developed Romanism of our own time. It is a fallacy convenient to controversialists, Catholic and Protestant; the former find in it an argument for the continuity of Roman doctrine and usage, the latter a weapon against

¹ Jowett, *Epistles of St. Paul*, ii. 342.

certain tendencies which are found not in historical Christianity only, but in human nature, and which they are apt to denounce indiscriminately and without knowledge. The vital difference is that, while the Catholicism of to-day is a Church among Churches, pre-Reformation Catholicism, for the West at least—and this is all that for our present purpose concerns us—was *the* Church. Nor is this distinction external only; it connotes differences of content, character, and outlook, no less essential than itself. The mediæval synthesis, though dominant, was not universal; nor, though decadent, was it beyond hope of recovery. The Renaissance culture entered into competition with it on its own ground; nor was it at first inconceivable that a harmony should be brought about between the two.

The Reformation teaching itself was no novelty; it was a combination of elements which already existed in the older system; it was the perspective, not the content, that was new. Nor was the transition from the one to the other system necessarily or invariably violent. The turmoil of revolution is felt at the centre rather than over the whole extent of the surface affected by the movement; it is probable that in many quiet German homes and villages the change passed all but unperceived. The positive reforms which took place were generally desired by good men; and the features of the old order which dropped out were not those which bore most intimately on the religious life; the same hymns were sung, the same Gospel was preached, the same bread broken, in many cases the accustomed ritual was in substance retained.¹ That such a transition would now be impossible indicates the change that has passed over the two communions; much that was then in solution has become stereotyped on each side. It was not the intention of the Reformers to separate from the Church; it was not the intention of the Church to lose half Europe. The schism was due to political rather than to religious causes. The Papacy, from the first rather a political than a religious institution, had become inextricably entangled in politics; concerned

¹ Cf. Lindsay, *History of the Reformation*, i. 121, 139, 375.

for its interests as an Italian principality and dependent on its allies, it moved at their instigation. Philip II was its Mephistopheles. Spain, decadent, barbaric, impracticable, cast the evil eye on Rome.

With fateful wings destiny lurked unseen below the horizon. Had the popes foreseen the result, they might—who knows?—have acted differently; but they did not and could not foresee it. Schisms, heresies even, there had been, but they had been temporary; a permanently divided Christendom was inconceivable to the mind of the time. The theological differences were not irreconcilable. It is easy to picture Melanchthon and Erasmus in one communion; yet the one was the friend and colleague of Luther, the other a possible cardinal under more than one pope. Till the Council of Trent, the doctrines of grace and justification were patient of an evangelical interpretation, and were in fact evangelically interpreted by men like Sadolet and Juan Valdes. Implicit as it was in the received teaching, the dogmatic development of Vaticanism was reserved for a later day. Sir Thomas More, for the greater part of his life, held that the Papacy was of human institution. Gardiner was a non-papal Catholic; Bonner, after his sort, assailed Clement VII with insult and abuse. The separation was brought about, not so much by the opposition between the two theological tendencies as such—this might have been overcome—as by the antagonism between the progressive and the reactionary elements in religion, and the refusal of Rome, on political grounds, to tolerate the former. Let the responsibility for the schism rest on its authors, not its victims. The Reformers did not desert, they were driven out of the Church.

Events momentous spring from causes least.

Could men foresee the results of their action, would action be possible? Would not the sense of responsibility crush, silence, and enervate? It might well be so. But we are the agents of a wisdom and a power not our own.

We have not set ourselves freely to this collective task or chosen our places. We are pushed on, organised, and

directed by the universal forces that govern the progress of humanity, by the ideals that are struggling to realise themselves in a not very distant future. Our interpretation of those obscure forces and ideals is sure to be faulty to some degree. Hardly any such moment in history—not the Protestant reform, nor the Jesuit reform, nor the Franciscan reform, nor even the Christian reform—has followed the lines foreseen and desired by its first adherents. Such men have been always the half-blinded instruments of a Power with far wider plans than theirs. Their partial bondage to an impossible Past has been the very condition of their serviceableness as mediating channels by which the values of the Past are transmitted to a Future which to them would have seemed as impossible, and altogether undesirable.¹

As diplomacy, nothing could be abler than the manner in which the popes dealt with their opponents, the princes, the non-Italian bishops, the friends of reform; promising all and conceding nothing, temporising, dividing, sowing discord, as occasion served. At the opening of the Council of Trent the great weight of Catholic opinion was in favour of the main demands of the Reformers: communion in both kinds, the open Bible, the vernacular service, the marriage of the clergy. At its close, the expectation of, and it might almost be said the demand for, these reforms had disappeared; the Church had fastened upon herself a bondage which till then, if not unknown, had been partial and intermittent. The vision of Gregory VII and Innocent III was realised; Rome was the Church, and the Church Rome. But at what a cost! The dream was shattered in its realisation. These great men aimed at no divided dominion. Ambitious they were, but their very ambition would have led them to reject a victory gained by the sacrifice of all that made victory significant or desirable. Not theirs to reign in a sectional Church or over a fragment of the world. Their successors judged differently; and it was a choice from which there was no going back. 'Ecce, convertimur ad Gentes!' The evolution process pursued its way; nothing could arrest or deflect it. But 'the

¹ Tyrrell, *Mediævalism*, p. 160.

other disciple outran Peter ' ; the Churches and the civilisation of the Reformation took over the birthright which Catholicism definitely and once for all declined. Since then, the jetsam of the tide, Rome, has remained unmoved by the movement of humanity ; the stream of life has flowed in other channels and to other seas. Her development—for she has developed—has been logical, not vital ; an inferring of proposition from proposition, not the growth that comes of and betokens life. And because, frame it as carefully as we will, no formula more than approximates to the actual, and because the formulas of Catholicism in particular were framed at a period when men's notions of fact, of evidence, and of history were rudimentary, logical consistency has been purchased at the price of an ever wider departure from truth ; while, for a Church, truth is the essential attribute, the foundation without which no structure, venerable and majestic as it may appear, can stand.

It is the fashion to disparage the Reformation ; and this disparagement is perhaps the result not only of the attacks of its enemies, but of the indiscretions of its friends. The Reformation was no new departure ; no new departure in religion is possible or conceivable ; it had its roots in the past and was conditioned by its antecedents, by the immediate as well as the remote past. Nor was it a re-discovery of a lost gospel. The Gospel was in the Church, and had been the life of generations of Christians through the darkest days. As an intellectual movement it was neither complete nor consistent. Statesmen, indifferent to religious considerations as such, saw in it a menace to public order ; it is said, perhaps not without foundation, that its immediate results were not favourable to morality, that piety suffered and good works declined. The large map is the answer. No great movement of mankind has been brought about without an admixture of evil ; the fetters of custom are not broken without convulsion ; good men are not all or always of one mind. How many virtues tend to support the established order ! There is a sanctity which is seldom found on the side of change.

The Reformers were not saints, least of all after this pattern. We must compare them, not with the machine-made standard of the Jesuit novice, an Aloysius, a Stanislas, or a Berchmans, but with men of their own type and calling, with their opponents, Eck, Aleander, Cajetan ; with the leaders of the Catholic reaction ; or, to go farther back, with the great men by whom the world was conquered for Christianity. They need not fear the comparison. There are other virtues than those of the cloister ; it takes all sorts to make a world. To say that their work was not final is to say that it was, as all human things are, relative. It represented an average, not an advanced, opinion ; a left centre, not an extreme left. It was well that it was so. Hubmaier and Franck were intellectually, perhaps even spiritually, in advance of Luther. For this very reason they were not, and could not be, founders. Their influence was of another order ; their harvest ripened when they, the sowers, were gone. But, with all its limitations, the Reformation was the mightiest uprising of the human spirit against wrong and falsehood which the world had yet seen. An intellectual advance, yes—for in the last resort the intellectual and the moral are one—but moral rather than intellectual, an emancipation of conscience more than of mind. It proceeded on concrete rather than abstract lines ; its history suggests 1688, not 1789. The Reformers were not great thinkers or professed theologians. Luther distrusted speculation ; Zwingli was a man of action ; Calvin's ' *Institutio* ' was mediæval in temper and method.

The movement represented primarily neither the learning of the scholar nor the insight of the mystic, but the revolt of the plain Christian against a burden which had become intolerable, and which the Church refused to remove or even relieve. The tyranny of the court of Rome ; the exactions of the clergy ; the crushing of the Gospel under a mountainous load of dogma, legend, and observance ; the false conscience induced by such fictitious obligations as celibacy, vows, asceticism, &c., by which religion had been degraded into a corrupt and burdensome convention—men must be freed from these things. This

was the message of Luther's three great 'Reformations-schriften' of 1520 ; this was his ultimatum to the Emperor and the princes at Worms. But there was no thought of breaking the unity of Christendom. The Confession of Augsburg followed the lines of ecclesiastical tradition ; its compilers 'claimed to belong to the ancient and visible Catholic Church.' Had they been met in the spirit by which they were animated, peace might have been restored. The world would have been the richer for its restoration. The old was good, though the new was inevitable ; it was not impossible to reconcile the two. But it was not to be. The central See, originally the guardian and guarantee of unity, had become the source of division ; the seamless robe was rent by the ingrained lust of domination and by the political exigencies of Rome.

Is it not the Popes who, with the sword of theological omniscience in one hand and that of juridical omnipotence in the other, have hacked the whole body of Christendom to pieces ; have split the East from the West, the Teutonic from the Latin races, the whole Church from the living world ? And all this under the pretext of securing a sterilising, insignificant, external uniformity—spiritually worthless and even disastrous ; a uniformity that sucks the life out of the whole body of the Church for the benefit of the head, that substitutes the judgment, will, and action of a single individual for that of the *orbis terrarum*.¹

The Reformation, as has been said, was not final. To imagine that it was, or could have been so, is to mistake the nature of life and thought. These processes are essentially movement, becoming. Could we conceive them arrested, history would be at an end ; it would be the descent of a glacial epoch, the kindly soil frozen and ice-bound, the streams checked in their flow. To the reproach, 'You change, therefore you are in error,' we answer, 'You do not change, therefore you are dead.' To apply the static conception of Christianity to the Reformed Church in general, or to any particular section of it, is to court disaster. This conception was framed by Catholic

¹ Tyrrell, *Mediævalism*, p. 76.

theologians with a view to the exigencies of their own apologetic ; if there be such a Church as it posits, theocratic, infallible, unchanging, that Church is Rome. Nor is it Rome only, but Rome at its most Roman ; the Rome of the *Unam Sanctam* and of the Vatican Council, of the Syllabus of 1864 and of that of 1907, of the Encyclical *Pascendi* and of Pius X. Elsewhere the misfit is palpable. If Rome is true, Protestantism, modelled on the Roman type, is an imitation ; if false, it is an imitation of an imitation, and doubly untrue. As a fact, the conception is at once baseless and unthinkable. The Christian fatherhood is wider than any sect, however imposing its scale. The letter, write it as large as we will, killeth ; it is the spirit that gives life. History is the record of its manifestation ; of the gradual penetration of the formless by form, of matter by spirit, of lower by higher life. It shows this form, spirit, life—call it as we will—realising itself more and more fully, rising into more explicit consciousness, passing over into its other and so transforming it into itself. And there can be neither break nor stay till this transformation is accomplished, till, in the words of the apostle, ‘ God be all in all.

The Reformers busied themselves with concrete issues ; they did the work that lay before them without looking far beyond. But the abstract of to-day is the concrete of to-morrow ; questions forced themselves on their followers which they had neither dealt with nor foreseen. The genius of Luther was essentially, it might even be said exclusively, religious. In religion he spoke from experience ; hence his power. Here he was an Augustine or a Paul. Elsewhere he was himself, a German peasant, vigorous, shrewd, conservative, with little sympathy with or insight into the needs of the new age which he had done so much to call into being. If the heart was right the rest would follow. Had not Christ disclaimed temporal authority ? It was for princes, not for private citizens, to bear rule in the State. Partly a reaction against papal and clerical encroachments, partly a defence against the reproach of promoting disorder, this subservience to rulers was one

of the greatest blots upon Lutheranism. We in this country have special reason to regret it. Under the shape of passive obedience it passed into the Church of England and provoked Nonconformity; more than any other one cause it hindered the English Church from becoming coextensive with the English race. Again, in dealing with mediæval tradition and usage, Protestantism went by rule of thumb rather than by scholarship, which was in its infancy, or by reasoning, of which it took little count. It cut off obvious excrescences and such features of the older system as had given occasion to superstition; but it took the current theology without question—the Trinitarian and Christological dogma, the theory of vicarious satisfaction, of the inerrancy and plenary inspiration of Scripture, and the like.

On neither side, the political or the theological, could the settlement be lasting. Society was outgrowing the existing order. In theological as in other sciences new knowledge was supplementing and correcting the old. Criticism, as yet a tendency rather than a fact, was preparing men's minds for the abandonment of the traditional standpoint; while in each case the inevitable transition was opposed by a combination of vested interests, material force, and fanaticism, genuine and assumed, which embittered feeling, delayed the natural course of events, and made the change, when it came, revolutionary. Instead of in the still small voice, the Lord was in the whirlwind; He spoke in thunder and in fire. So that man asked, 'Is this indeed His voice?' seeing the smoke and the bloodshed, hearing the noise of battle, the crash of altar and throne. The large map is the key to the position. It is difficult to discern the religious idea in the scoffing philosophy of the eighteenth century, in the anarchy and slaughter of the Terror, in the dry and chilling rationalism of to-day. To do so we must look at these movements from more than one point of view, recognising the philanthropic passion of men like Voltaire, the humanitarian idea that underlay the Revolution, the love of truth and jealous fear of falsehood which

find expression in secularism. Nor must we forget the colossal injustice and hypocrisy against which these things were a protest—the oppression of the old absolutisms and aristocracies, the corruption and worldliness of the Churches, the smooth and heartless convention that passes for and brings discredit on religious belief. Above all, we must remember how the whole has worked out. Will any thoughtful man, comparing the England of to-day with that of the Regency, the France of the third Republic with that of Louis XV, the Italy of the house of Savoy with that of the Pope and the Bourbons, give the preference to the old order, or question that, morally as well as materially, the new is better ?

Religion and the Church, we are told, have suffered. Do not let us be duped by words. The Spirit at work in the world and in humanity manifests itself not only in religion and in the Church, but on a wider field. Its action is universal ; it meets us in history, in experience, in civilisation, and generally in man. Religion is a part of this manifestation, a part important and indispensable, but still a part only, and, as such, subordinate to the whole. The Church, the world—to how much misconception have these abstractions given occasion ! What is the Church but mankind viewed from the religious standpoint ? The world, but this same mankind taken in a wider sense and with a larger connotation—the ‘*quicquid agunt homines*’ of the poet ; human nature with its various and changing sides ? To set up an opposition between the two is a sophism. The distinction is nominal ; the thing denoted is one and the same in each case. The relation between the Church and the world, using the terms in the sense indicated, has varied. At times, as in the early Middle Ages, the former has been in advance of the latter ; at times they have stood much on the same level. There have been periods when, as to-day, the Church lags behind, meeting the advance of the world with stubborn opposition and impotent rebuke. At such periods feeling runs high on both sides. The Church sees in the world a godless Antichrist ; the world sees in the Church an obstruction, a barrier

standing in the way. Such was the estimate common during the onward movement of the eighteenth and the reaction of the nineteenth century. We can see the how and the why of this. The world was godless, the Church obstructive; yes. But to see no farther than this into either is not to see the wood for the trees. The dualism which opposed the one to the other is 'a compendium of many heresies. Any barrier that hinders their free interchange of benefits is impoverishing to both sides.'

It would be rash to count too much on the better understanding between these two aspects or departments of experience which seems to prevail in our own time. This understanding falls short of an alliance or even a reconciliation; it is an *entente* rather than an *entente cordiale*. It is the result of criticism, of the historical method, of the philosophy of relativity; and it is from this side that its development is to be expected; for these weapons are best handled by those trained in their use. The world understands the Church better than the Church the world. On each side the understanding is intellectual rather than moral; hence its failure to bring about more than a precarious *modus vivendi*. That the philosopher sees how religion came to be what it is does not enable him to recognise and appreciate the idea that underlies it. The Churchman may be shrewd enough to reckon with, say, democracy, as a fact, while remaining profoundly hostile to its spirit. In this case he will probably attempt to capture it for party purposes, to direct its waters into a new course. Such efforts, which are predestined to failure, give an impression of disingenuousness; and their result is a natural distrust of the quarter from which they proceed. Hence an antidogmatism as dogmatic as the dogmatism against which it is directed; a sectarianism as narrow and unscrupulous as that which it is pledged to destroy. Yet the advance, not indeed of definite belief, but of religious temper, is unmistakable. The sense of the obligation of public service, of the duties of class to class, of the responsibility of society to its members in general and in particular, is increasing and likely to increase.

One of the greatest of German theologians, Richard Rothe, looked forward to what he called the passing over (*Aufgehen*) of the Church into the world. By this he meant not that the religious element in life should be merged in the secular—nothing was farther from his mind—but that society should rise to a fuller sense of its origin, course, and destiny, and so occupy itself with that department of life of which the Church is too apt to claim a monopoly. It would seem as if his anticipation was in a fair way to be realised. We have come to believe that the conscience of the community as a whole is a safer guide than that of any section of the community; that the general is to be trusted before the particular, even the clerical mind. Indifference to formula and neglect of observance are on the increase; hence a certain loss which, we believe, is temporary and will be balanced by gain in other directions, but the effect of which is, and cannot but be, felt. Scepticism claims, and, it is to be feared, will continue to claim, its victims, particularly in the Latin countries, where the Church, instead of representing, as among ourselves, the average religious sense of the community, has fallen into the hands of an extreme faction bent at all costs on regaining its lost supremacy and on enforcing its impossible creed. Tragic, however, as is the situation for individuals, we need not, we may not, despair. The large map, the law of progress, forbid it. The Church, the world, religion, have passed through greater extremities and come out stronger for the ordeal. Individuals, generations, suffer—such is the law of life—but they count for little in the history of humanity; there is ‘a loftier range, a larger view.’ If this be ours we may, as Dr. Pfeiderer hopes—

look forward confidently to the future, certain that in this twentieth century Christianity will make good progress towards the goal to which its whole history has been one long endeavour—the realisation of the God-Manhood, the penetration of the whole mind and life of mankind by the Divine Spirit of Freedom, Truth, and Love.¹

¹ Pfeiderer, *Christentum und Religion*, ii. 270.

X. DEVELOPMENT

THAT the theory of evolution should have been received with hostility, and should still be regarded with suspicion, by theologians is a striking instance of the extent to which judgment may be obscured by prejudice. For it is only by a liberal use of this theory that the beliefs and institutions of the Churches of to-day can be defended: the primary admission incumbent on the historian faced by the problem of the relation of later Christianity to that of the first ages is, that 'in the beginning it was not so.' The first name that will occur to English readers in this connexion is that of John Henry Newman. In his 'Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine' this eminent divine found himself under the necessity of dealing with this delicate and at the time (1845) novel position. The book was epoch-making: it was the bridge between Tractarianism and Rome. It helps us to understand the epidemic of atavism which in the middle of the last century led so many Englishmen to revert from the somewhat jejune Protestantism of the period to the fuller beliefs and more picturesque observances of mediæval religion.

The author was gravitating surely, and no longer slowly, Romeward—he was bound, he felt, to justify his action to himself and to others; he was a considerable patristic scholar, and—he was one of the most consummate advocates who ever lived. He was aware that there were certain specifically Roman doctrines and practices which it was difficult to bring under the famous Vincentian Canon: and he met the difficulty, first, by an effective *tu quoque*, 'Whatever be historical Christianity, it is not Protestantism. If ever there were a safe truth, it is this';¹ and, secondly,

¹ *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, p. 5.

by pointing out that the canon, taken literally, was fatal to the dogmatic position—which he and his opponents alike took for granted—as such; since it was notorious that fundamental beliefs common to England and Rome had been ignored, ambiguously expressed, and even denied by early writers. This, indeed, was no new position; it had been triumphantly upheld in the seventeenth century by the Jesuit Petavius against Bull and Bossuet. Tertullian's 'Fuit tempus cum Filius non fuit' was Arianism pure and simple; the teaching of St. Basil and the Gregories on original sin was scarcely to be distinguished from that of Pelagius; Hooker's apology for them amounts to no more than a plea in mitigation of judgment: 'Shall we give sentence of death inevitable against all those Fathers in the Greek Church which, being mispersuaded, died in the error of free will?' But the controversy, famous in its day, had, after the manner of controversies, been forgotten; Newman's book burst like a bombshell on the religious world. On the one hand it cut away the 'Perpétuité de la Foi'—the keystone, it was believed, of orthodoxy; on the other it opened the door to uncertainty and error of every description; if it justified the Athanasian theology, it justified also the creed of Pius IV. He proposed to account for the facts by a theory which he called that of 'Developments'—namely:—

that the increase and expansion of the Christian creed and ritual, and the variations which have attended the process in the case of individual writers and Churches, are the necessary attendants on any philosophy or polity which takes possession of the intellect and heart and has any wide or extended dominion; that, from the nature of the human mind, time is necessary for the full comprehension and perfection of great ideas; and that the highest and most wonderful truths, though communicated to the world once for all by inspired teachers, could not be comprehended all at once by the recipients, but, as received and transmitted by minds not inspired and through media which were human, have required only the longer time and deeper thought for their full elucidation.¹

¹ *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, p. 29.

But the theory was too subtle to command general acceptance. First, it was 'a hypothesis to account for a difficulty,' and orthodoxy does not readily recognise difficulties; secondly, such catchwords as 'Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus,' or the 'unanimus consensus patrum,' empty as they were of any real content, were more effective, because more easily understood. Protestants distrusted it because it was devised in the interests of Catholicism; Catholics, because it represented Catholicism as 'another Gospel,' an aftergrowth contained only implicitly in the Gospel of Christ. It is impossible to suppose that so acute a mind as Newman's was blind to the applications of which his theory was capable, or to the results to which, when thus applied, it led. But it was no business of his to indicate them; he used it for a particular purpose, and no farther. His conception of it, indeed, oscillates between that of an evolution properly so called—which, valid as it is, is foreign to the antiquity on which he relied and which he desired to re-establish—and that of a mere explication, 'a development of distinctness of analysis.' And, under the guidance of the idea which inspired the book throughout, he lays down certain skilfully chosen 'tests of a true development'—preservation of type, continuity of principles, power of assimilation, early anticipation, logical sequence, preservative additions, chronic continuance—of which it is not too much to say that it is impossible to conceive a corruption of the Gospel which could not be brought under one or other of them. Brilliant as the argument is, it is advocacy, not science. Catholicism is on trial, and we are listening to counsel for the defence.

Since then much water has flowed under the bridges. During the last half-century the historical sense has developed to such an extent as to transform our outlook over the past. Before, taking names for things, we construed it in the terms of the present, attributing to men of remote ages the conceptions, the standpoints, the institutions of to-day. The 'Church' of which we read in the New Testament suggested an organised society like the Church of Rome or the Church of England; a 'deacon,'

a newly ordained curate fresh from Oxford ; a 'bishop,' a dignitary living in a palace and wearing lawn sleeves. Human nature, it is true, is much the same at all times ; its elemental needs, instincts, and passions sway, as they have swayed and will always sway, men. But this identity is fundamental, and subsists under an almost infinite diversity of setting and detail. Hence, over and above a knowledge of the facts and the power of weighing evidence, the faculty of historical imagination is part of the equipment of the student. This faculty is characteristic of the writer of romance : Scott possessed a double portion of it. And the qualities that made him great in romance made him great in history ; others speak, and we listen ; Scott opens our eyes, and we see. The historian must live in the past ; he must look at men of a former age from their own point of view and judge them by their own standards ; he must put himself in the place of the characters he describes. In religious origins, as elsewhere, the Where and When are vital ; it is hopeless to attempt to understand primitive Christianity till we have ceased to regard it from the standpoint of the Christianity of to-day. The thoughts of the Christians of the first generation were not our thoughts ; their reading of experience, their canons of belief, their modes of consciousness and expression, all were other than ours. They were neither Catholic nor Protestant, neither Anglican nor Puritan, neither High nor Low nor Broad Church. If we think we find the tenets of modern sects or parties among them, we deceive ourselves ; they belong to earlier strata, which, with their fauna and flora, have long since disappeared. Religious enthusiasm, to take one instance out of many, has, for good or evil, become foreign to us ; we pass it over, when we meet with it in the lives of the saints, or among the Anabaptists or the Scottish Covenanters, with a shrug of impatience, or even of contempt. But this attitude is an absolute disqualification for the historian of early Christianity ; for the Christianity of the first days was nothing if not enthusiastic ; its adherents were enthusiasts to a man. They spoke with tongues, they prophesied, they worked and experienced wonders, they

saw visions, they dreamed dreams. Families are subject to strange vicissitudes ; the respectable Churchgoer of to-day would find himself as little at home among his spiritual ancestors as was Baillie Nicol Jarvie among his uncomfortable kinsmen, the Children of the Mist. The past is past ; we cannot recall it. If Christianity has developed—that is, ceased to be what it was, and become what it was not—it does not follow that the process was pathological ; primitive Christianity had to perish that Christianity might survive. But a price had to be paid for its survival. The distinctive features of the development were historical, not evangelical ; not only, that is to say, are they absent from Christ's personal teaching, but there is a radical difference of temper between the two. This is the key to the whole position. Had Christianity appeared at the outset in the shape that it had assumed by the end of the third century, Newman's arguments would have been unanswerable. The hierarchy was established, dogma in process of formation ; the discrepancies between Nicene and Tridentine Catholicism, considerable as they are, could be accounted for by explication ; the data were present, if the conclusions had not been drawn. But, convincing as an answer to the Anglican who appealed from Trent to Nicæa and Ephesus, the 'Essay on Development' was inconclusive as against the Christian who appealed from all three—from Pope and Church and Council—to Christ. The problem lay farther back. The germs of the new growth, of ecclesiasticism, are to be found in the Apostolic age. It is the signal merit of German theology to have perceived this. German theologians, be their shortcomings what they may, are inquirers, not advocates ; they cultivate the scientific temper ; they see, or at least do their best to see, things as they are, and follow the consequent thought, instead of attempting to divert or guide it, lead where it will. 'Die Anfänge unserer Religion' is German in this, the best sense of the word. It is objective ; it sacrifices neither impression to detail nor detail to impression. There are points on which the author's judgment tends to arbitrariness. A certain dogmatism *à rebours* characterises his

Christology; his interpretation of St. Paul's teaching overstates the element of incipient Catholicising which that teaching undoubtedly contains. But no English book covers the same ground, or is conceived with the same breadth and sanity; in few works in any language are learning and insight so happily combined.

The main features of the teaching of Christ as set before us in the Synoptic Gospels are not open to question. 'Christianity is in its essence a layman's religion, because Jesus, a layman, was its prophet.'¹ It was without theology, without law, without priesthood, and without ritual. Nor was it only without these things; it was a protest against and an emancipation from them: 'We are not under the law, but under grace.' The Christ of the Synoptics is no philosopher: His sayings cannot be reduced to a system or made the premisses of a syllogism; they are literary, not scientific; He felt rather than knew. The overburdening sense of human sin, which, unknown to Hebrew antiquity, had its origin not so much in any deepening of the moral consciousness as in the long sufferings of the Jewish people, and was so conspicuous in St. Paul, finds no echo in Him. 'This whole psychology of sin is symptomatic of disease. . . . The joyousness of childhood was possessed by Jesus in a degree which we can scarcely picture to ourselves.'² He diffuses an atmosphere of large and serene freedom; no cloud obscures the 'Kindly Light' of the central sun. The three great lines of later Christian thought—the ecclesiastical, the Pauline-Augustinian, and the rational—are, in the literal sense of the word, unevangelical; the Gospel knows nothing of them; they are not of Christ. This statement may be traversed by reference to such passages as Matthew xvi. 18, 19; Mark ix. 43–48, x. 45. But these, when their sense has not been obscured or lost by faulty exegesis, present us with the reflection of a later generation on Christ's teaching rather than with his own words. Those even who are unwilling to accept this account of the matter must interpret the part by the whole. If, in a document the general tenour of which is unmistak-

¹ Wernle, *Die Anfänge unserer Religion*, p. 61.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 63, 275.

able, a clause occurs here and there which points in a different direction, it is against all rules of interpretation to read the document as a whole in the light, real or apparent, of these clauses. Rather they must be conceived and construed in its spirit ; or, at most, left over as a problem to be solved.

‘Jesus was a Galilean through and through.’ This is the key to the Man, His mind, and His personal work. He stifled in the Judaism of Jerusalem ; from first to last there was war to the knife between it and Him. To the enthusiastic Youth, fresh from the diviner shrines of the hillside and the lakeshore, one with the mystery of Creation, seeing God in nature and Nature again in God, there was something forced and artificial in the formal liturgy and set forms of the Temple. ‘Neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem,’ but ‘in spirit and in truth.’ An element of the shambles is inseparable from sacrificial worship. As the tainted smoke rose from its altars He recalled the ‘sacrifice and burnt offering thou wouldest not of the Psalmist, or Jeremiah’s emphatic ‘I commanded it not, neither came it into my mind.’ We do not read of His taking part in worship of this kind, and it is difficult to conceive His having done so : the people acclaimed Him as a prophet, but neither friend nor enemy ever spoke of Him as a priest. A villager, not a townsman, He was wise with the wisdom which comes of communing with Nature rather than with books or men. For years He had fed his mind

in a wise passiveness ;

and, when His time for teaching came, He taught ‘not as the Scribes.’ This was the new note that struck His hearers, the note of actuality ; He had

come forth into the light of things.

The temper of the poet was His :—

The common growth of Mother Earth
Suffices me—her tears, her mirth,
Her humblest mirth and tears.

No man ever had a keener Nature-sense ; no teaching was ever so spontaneous, so instinctive, so full of light and air. He lived in that intimate contact with the soil which means health of mind and body ; He was a lover of the fields, the hills, the free peasant life of Galilee lived in the open—in sun, wind, and rain. The formal, or institutional, in religion was foreign to Him ; ‘ the language of theology seems never to fall from His lips.’ He broke with the trammels of the past—tradition, the written text, the letter of the law—interpreting, rejecting, superseding freely. ‘ The attitude of Jesus to the Old Testament may be described in three words : Piety, Scepticism, and Criticism.’ Grasping the permanent, the divine element in religion, He was indifferent to the changing, or human. If it is too much to say that He was untouched by the limitations of the religious consciousness of His time, at least they existed for Him at their irreducible minimum ; He moved in a higher region ; His was ‘ the peace of an unfathomable sky.’ His life was of the simplest. He was poor and in labours ; He had not where to lay His head. But it was lived in the free air and in the sunshine ; of asceticism, the deliberate trampling on and uprooting of Nature, we find in Him never a trace. ‘ The common people heard Him gladly.’ He spoke out of His heart to theirs, and in their own tongue. From them He chose His special followers ; to them He delivered His divine message, speaking to them of the Fatherhood of God, of the brotherhood of men, and of the Kingdom of God that was to come upon the earth. How far are we here, on the one hand, from the elaborate Temple ritual, the priesthood, and the sacrifices of the Law ; and, on the other, from the casuistry, the empty dogmatism, the interminable disputations of the Scribes ! Of the former a Jewish writer says, ‘ God did not so much command as tolerate them ’ ; of the latter, ‘ the letter (we read) killeth ’ ; but ‘ the words that I speak unto you are spirit and life.’ Hence the break with official Judaism. Two successive stages may be traced in Christ’s attitude to the received religion. The latter only was one of avowed hostility ; but in the former the antagonism was latent, and could not fail to be discerned by eyes quickened by self-interest and pride of caste. Was the

relation between man and God that of son and Father ? Then there was no room for a mediating priesthood. Did God see the returning sinner 'when he was yet a great way off,' and have compassion, and run, and fall on his neck, and kiss him ? Then the sacrifices of the Law, by which an offended Deity was reconciled, were useless ; their motive was gone. So with legalism, the Mosaic legislation as a whole and the superstructure built on it by the Scribes. Its foundation was undermined. Grace and law are incommensurable. To them that believe there is no law and no condemnation ; the law written on the heart is law only by a metaphor ; it is part of the self, not a thing imposed from without. And with this falls the whole fabric of the Jewish theocracy, with its particularism, its national privileges, its exclusive claims to divine election. The change was nothing short of a revolution ; 'old things are passed away ; behold, all things are become new.'

The belief in the Parousia, the literal and immediate Coming of Christ, is the key to the life and mind of the Church of the first age. It accounts for its distinctive features, and explains the absence of much that, looking back from later standpoints, men have expected to find in it, and have tried in vain to find. The Kingdom of Heaven, or of God, which Christ preached, was 'at hand' ; the future to which it belonged was a future treading on the heels of the present ; it was 'near, even at the doors.' The Gospel was the good news of its nearness ; hence its paradoxes, as they seem to us, whose point of view is so different : 'take no thought for to-morrow,' 'resist not evil,' 'go and sell that thou hast.' In what precise sense Christ Himself understood this proximity it is difficult to determine ; but, while it is probable that such discourses as that attributed to Him in Matthew xxiv. 4-22 are, in fact, anonymous fragments of early Christian prophecy, we can scarcely credit Him with the modern conception of prolonged and indefinite delay. The *πάσας τὰς ἡμέρας* of Matthew xxviii. 20 will not bear the meaning which we, 'on whom the ends of the world are come,' read into it ; before the existing generation had passed away, it was believed, the Lord would come. The results of such a belief on those who enter-

tained it can scarcely be imagined. Conceive a community animated by it ; what a revolution in feeling, thought, and conduct would follow ! Take no thought for to-morrow would be its basis ; whereas for us the whole art of life consists in taking thought for to-morrow, in foresight ; we work for posterity, for the future ; the thought of to-morrow is inseparably bound up in that of to-day. Politics, industry, research, the Church, the State, the family, the higher interests even of the individual, all rest on the assumption that our environment is, relatively at least, permanent ; that to-day will be succeeded by to-morrow, to-morrow by the day after, and so on indefinitely. The removal of this assumption could not but withdraw men from the ordinary duties of life. Why work to build up an empire, a family, a fortune, when the *flammanitia mœnia mundi* are falling about us ? Why make long plans, accumulate knowledge, search into the secrets of Nature ; why

Scorn delights and live laborious days

when the end is imminent, ' the figure of this world ' passing away ? So thought the Christians of the first age. They withdrew, accordingly, from public life ; they made ' no provision ' for the future ; it was so uncertain, they thought, that there would be a to-morrow that they lived, planned, and acted only for to-day. This is the explanation of St. Paul's famous excursus on marriage.¹ He had ' no commandment of the Lord,' and his counsel on the matter is not, primarily at least, ascetic, as some have thought, but relative to the circumstances of the time as the Apostolic Church conceived them : ' this is good for the present distress '—*διὰ τὴν ἐνεστώσαν ἀνάγκην*—and because ' the time is short.' The late organisation of the Church, and fixing of her standards, the fluidity of her teaching for the first three or more generations, the gap between the literature of the Apostolic and that of the post-Apostolic age—these things, which are so unaccountable and so perplexing to us, are the natural consequence of the attitude of intense

¹ 1 Corinthians vii.

expectation in which the Christians of the time lived. What would we not give to be able to supply these deficiencies? We read and re-read the few documents that have come down to us; we catch at the least hint or suggestion that the ingenuity of scholars can derive, directly or indirectly, from whatever source. But with them it was otherwise. Those even who had 'known Christ after the flesh' knew Him so now no longer. What great value was to be attached even to the most sacred events of this world if it were so soon to be lost in another? Why make provision for the Church of the future, her ministry, her worship, her theology, when the Church of the present was—to-day it might be—to greet her returning Lord?

The word 'Church,' indeed, is misleading in this connexion. The *ἐκκλησία* of the New Testament is not a permanent organised body, like the 'Churches' of to-day, with definite creeds and a fixed ritual, but a 'little flock' of believers on whom the Spirit rested, who were, literally, 'waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' The question of dogma, ceremonial, and Church government so hotly discussed in later generations would have been unintelligible to them. Ceremonial they had none; their beliefs were instinctive, not dogmatic; they were a 'brotherhood' rather than a corporation or society: it is among the Quakers, the Irvingites, or the members of the Salvation Army that we shall find their nearest counterparts to-day. The early Protestant translators who rendered *ἐκκλησία* *congregation* showed more insight than, perhaps, they knew: *Church* had acquired a connotation which was not contained in, and which it was important to remove from, the term. The ministry—here again the word is used in its literal, not its later, sense—of the infant community, or communities, was charismatic, not official. It was based on the outpouring of the Spirit: 'Prophecy is one of the distinguishing features of the first age.' The believer as such was a *πνευματικός*—that is, charismatically endowed, and called upon to exercise his ministry in one form or another. This form, indeed, was not the same in all cases, but all prophesied; the distinction between clergy and

laity was unknown. This is not to say that all were equal: but 'the distinctions which St. Paul makes between Christians are based not upon office, but upon varieties of spiritual power.' In every community 'certain members were more prominent than others: 'The community as a whole consisted of two classes, ἡγούμενοι and ἄγιοι.'¹ Among these ἡγούμενοι a threefold division soon manifested itself—Apostles, prophets, and teachers. The division, indeed, is not exhaustive; we read also of evangelists and pastors. Nor is the distinction between the classes clearly drawn, the Apostles and the prophets overlapped. But criticism such as this would have seemed of no importance to a Christian of the time: the broad line of demarcation was drawn not between those who exercised this or that charisma, but between those who were and those who were not of the community. The functions of these ἡγούμενοι were occasional, and many of those who discharged them wandered like missionaries from place to place, founding new communities and exhorting and building up those already established; while others, the teachers in particular, were settled in a particular city or district, and formed a link between the early itinerant and the later local ministries. These last were economic in their origin; the Eucharistic meal and the administration of the offerings connected with it called them into existence. As the communities increased in number the uncertain services of peripatetic Apostles and evangelists no longer sufficed for their needs. Local officers were appointed, to whom the important duty of distributing the alms of the brotherhood to its poorer members was entrusted, and who, in the absence of a prophet, presided at its meetings, of which the Eucharist formed the distinctive part. Here, as before, three classes of functionaries may be distinguished—bishops, presbyters, and deacons. No clear line of separation exists between the two former. The bishop was originally the temporary president of a body of presbyters or elders; at times there were several bishops in one city. By degrees the presidency was given permanently to one ruling elder, to whom, consequently,

¹ Sohm, *Kirchenrecht*, p. 28; cf. Hebrews xiii. 7, 17, 24.

the name of bishop pre-eminently attached itself. But the duties of the office had regard, as before, primarily to the temporalities of the community. The qualifications for the episcopate enumerated in 1 Timothy iii. sufficiently indicate its nature, which is substantially the same as that of the diaconate,¹ and differ from those required from an Apostle or prophet. The *μᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα*, in particular, would be unmeaning in connexion with the office as it existed in the later Church. To interpret the words as a prohibition of second marriage—the ‘bigamy’ of the canonists—is to go behind the text, and, indeed, involves an anachronism. The obvious meaning is that he to whom so responsible a charge as that of the *ἐπισκοπή* is committed must be no untried, perhaps susceptible, youth, without family ties and domestic duties, but a grave, elderly Christian, with a reputation and permanent residence in the community, a sober married man. The main problem of Church history lies in the process by which this local and economic supplanted the earlier universal and charismatic ministry; and how, from the primitive identification of the community with the *κλήρος*, a ‘clergy’ in the later sense of the word emerged. The ‘spiritual gifts’—tongues, prophecy, and the rest—were obviously open to misuse and misconception: in 1 Corinthians xiv. we have a picture of the disorders to which they led. The *εὐσχημόνως καὶ κατὰ τάξιν* of St. Paul became a watchword; it was essential, if Christianity were not to fall into discredit, that it should be enforced. Enthusiasm passed easily into hysteria, or became a cloak for self-interest; ‘of this sort are they which creep into houses and lead captive silly women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts.’ The repeated exhortations to manual labour² are significant. The ‘Didachè’ is explicit against the greed and encroachments of those who were, or professed to be, ‘spiritual’; the prophets were forbidden to demand contributions in money or kind for their own maintenance; the periodical visit of the Apostle was not to exceed two days. As time went on the ‘spiritual gifts’

¹ 1 Timothy v. 8–14; Acts vi. 2.

² 1 Thessalonians iv. 11; ■ Thessalonians iii. 6–12.

became rarer, and their utility more open to question: a difference of interest and standpoint manifested itself between the 'spiritual' and the ordinary Christian, the wandering prophet and the settled local community. Traces of this are to be found in the Gospels: the allusion to those 'who devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers,' and the injunction 'freely ye have received, freely give,' are significant, and embody the experience of a later generation than that of Christ. The financial power of the local ministry increased its weight and influence. Analogies from the Synagogue organisation and from Greek forms of association, guild, and municipal, were pressed into service. *In Christum defluxit Esdras*: Old Testament parallels were applied and extended; a new 'Law' took the place of the liberty of the Gospel, a theocratic polity that of the loosely organised brotherhood. And when Gnosticism threatened to obliterate the lines of historical Christianity the episcopate, which had hitherto been a status rather than an office, changed its character: the bishop became first the guardian of the 'depositum,'¹ then its witness and expounder; finally his relation to the community developed into that of teacher to taught. Meantime the doctrine and ritual of the Sacraments had undergone a profound change. With regard to Eucharistic doctrine, says P. Semeria, we must not expect to find in the first ages 'the developed formulas and precise theological conceptions of a later time.'² It was long before these arose. But there can be no doubt that the Sacraments became more prominent in the post-Apostolic than they had been in the Apostolic period. A bishop of the second century would not have said 'I thank God that I baptized none of you,' or 'Christ sent me not to baptize.' From symbols, or tokens of Church membership (*Gemeinschaftszeichen*), they had become effectual signs, the link between Nature and the supernatural. In the Pastoral Epistles baptism is the *λουτρὸν παλινγενεσίας*, in Ignatius the Eucharist is the *φάρμακον ἀθανασίας*, already in the

¹ 1 Timothy vi. 20.

² *Dogma, Gerarchia, e Culto nella chiesa primitiva*, p. 362.

Fourth Gospel it is a condition of eternal life. And as prophecy died out—how gradual the process was may be seen in Weinelt's luminous treatise, 'Die Wirkungen des Geistes und der Geister im nachapostolischen Zeitalter bis zum Irenæus'—the dispensation of those mystical vehicles of grace fell into the hands of the local ministry, which thus, while retaining its administration of the temporalities of the community, acquired a spiritual as well as an economic character, and succeeded as heir by default the Apostles and prophets of an earlier age. By the third century, if not sooner, Christianity was embodied in a visible Church, provided with a hierarchy, an external worship, strictly formulated codes, dogmatic and ceremonial: the living waters flow, but they have been turned into fixed channels; their native freedom, their spontaneity is gone. The Idea has materialised itself, and is scarcely to be recognised in its unaccustomed clothing: the Word has, in a new and less happy sense, been made flesh. A concatenation of circumstances led, we have seen, to the change; but external causes would have been powerless to bring it about had they not been seconded by an ally within. It is easier to do than to be. '*La médiocrité fonde l'autorité.*' It is the man who knows religion only as usage and obedience that creates the priest, for the purpose of ridding himself of an essential part of the obligations which he feels, by loading the priest with them. He also makes ordinances, for the semi-religious prefer an ordinance, law, to the Gospel.¹ He creates dogma, for he will have a definite answer to every question; he has not taught his tongue to say 'I do not know.' He will have ritual; its exotic atmosphere alternately stimulates and soothes his senses. He will have a religion of mystery, of the marvellous; unless he sees signs and wonders he will not believe. He is conscious, in his better moments, of his need of redemption, though he knows neither how to seek nor where to find it; and, hearing the 'Lo! here is Christ, or there,' against Christ's warning, he believes. But, because these better moments come and go, he will compromise with the Gospel. He cannot rid

¹ Harnack, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, p. 130.

himself of conscience, but he will make his own conscience. He desires to remain under law ; for it is easy, if not to fulfil, at least in some way to circumvent or evade a legal obligation. What he will not have is the law of the higher self, which is what it is whether we will or no, inexorable, inevitable ; the surrender to an all-present, all-embracing God. Hence an average, a popular Christianity : ¹ a religion of the second order, priestly, dogmatic, statutory, corresponding to a self half relinquished, a redemption half accepted, a God half believed. 'We are but servants of God by natural generation : sonship is first given to us by regeneration in Christ.'

Christianity, then, ceased to be what it was, and became what it was not. That 'primitive Christianity perished in order that Christianity might survive' ² may be, and is, true ; but it did perish. The account of the matter put by Newman as an impossible hypothesis is, in point of fact, scarcely exaggerated : it was

clean swept away as if by a deluge, suddenly, silently, and without memorial ; by a deluge coming in a night, and utterly soaking, rotting, heaving up, and hurrying off every vestige of what is found in the Church before cock-crowing : so that 'when they rose in the morning' her true seed 'were all dead corpses'—nay, dead and buried—and without gravestone. 'The waters went over them ; there was not one of them left : they sank, like lead, in the mighty waters.' ³

Nor is this the paradox that he conceives it. 'It is not only the matters over which theologians dispute that are of consequence. The most important events come about silently, unbidden, and unforbidden, in virtue of the natural process of change incident to human life and intercourse.' ⁴ On details differences of opinion exist, and will continue to exist. This or that critic may have overstated his case, pressed his point of view one-sidedly, or overlooked con-

¹ Wernle, *Die Anfänge unserer Religion*, pp. 131, 212.

² Harnack, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, p. 9.

³ *Church of the Fathers*, p. 327.

⁴ Wernle, *Die Anfänge unserer Religion*, p. 271.

siderations that make against it. But the broad lines of the situation are no longer open to controversy : the *securus judicat orbis*, which rang in Newman's ears till it flung him into the arms of Rome, applies. The more candidly this is admitted the better : half the mischief in the world comes from people seeing things, not as they are, but as, it is thought, they ought to be, and shutting their eyes to inconvenient facts. The first condition of knowledge is to get out of this way of looking at things. Facts are neither convenient nor inconvenient, but existent or non-existent. We have neither to approve nor disapprove, to welcome nor deplore them ; but to observe, to register, and to infer. It is for the historian to trace them, to discuss their origin and growth. It is for the theologian to estimate their religious worth, assigning them their due place, neither less nor more, in the Christian scheme. For that they have such a place, that they affect and modify religious conceptions, is beyond question. It has been urged of theology, as of metaphysics, that it is a beating the air from which nothing follows, a ploughing the sands from which no crop comes. Such a view argues a defect either of knowledge or of insight. He must be blind who, surveying the field in either case, does not recognise the increase that has come about, the advance that has been and is being made. To contribute to this advance is the work of the philosopher and the theologian. 'This I know : the theologians of every country only half discharge their duties if they think it enough to treat of the Gospel in the recondite language of learning and bury it in scholarly folios.'¹ As the believer, for his own and others' sake, must have a reason for the faith that is in him, so the theologian must translate his theology into the terms of religion. Why ? Because on every side men are perplexed and troubled. Like stars at dawn, the gods are paling out of the firmament ; doubt and distress are invading the ancient shrines. The Church, the Bible, are undermined ; in this high region reason is powerless : it is with us as it was with the monk Serapion, of whom Cassian records that, convinced at last of the incorporeal

¹ Harnack, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, Preface to English edition.

nature of the Deity, he flung himself in despair upon the ground, exclaiming, 'Heu me miserum! Tulerunt a me Deum meum; et quem nunc teneam non habeo, et quem adorem aut interpellem.' Such is the power of the imagination. For, in truth, these things are not as we picture them. If, like the prophet, the critic is set 'to pluck up, and to break down, and to destroy, and to overthrow,' this is but half his work: the mission of each is, in the last resort, constructive—'to build and to plant.'

Jérusalem est sortie plus brillante et plus belle du travail en apparence destructeur de la science moderne. Les pieux récits dont on a bercé notre enfance sont devenus, grâce à une saine interprétation, de hautes vérités: et c'est à nous qui voyons Israël dans sa réelle beauté, c'est à nous autres critiques, qu'il appartient vraiment de dire—*Stantes erant pedes nostri in atriis tuis, Jerusalem.*

For it is possible to detach the kernel from the husk, the idea from its setting, the unchanging substance of religion from its necessarily changing forms. This is the real issue between Harnack and Loisy; and Harnack is right and Loisy wrong. Ill would it be for us were it not so. The Kingdom, as the Church of the first days conceived it, did not come; the stately edifice of dogma built up by Fathers and Councils is crumbling; the world-wide theocracy of the Middle Ages has become the shadow of a name. What is left? That which these things in their time symbolised, embodied, finally obscured—and, because they obscured it, perished: Christ, and faith in Him. There are only two possibilities here. Either the Gospel is in all respects identical with its earliest form, in which case it came with its time and has departed with it; or else it contains something which, under different historical forms, is of permanent validity. The latter is the true view. From the beginning it was a question of getting rid of formulas, correcting expectations, altering ways of feeling; and this is a process to which there is no end. But the difficulty is greater in appearance than in reality, because 'the thing reveals itself. No one who possesses a

fresh eye for what is alive, and a true feeling for what is really great, can fail to see it and distinguish it from its contemporary integument. . . . The Christian religion means one thing, and one thing only: eternal life in the midst of time, by the strength and under the eyes of God.' ¹ Or, as it is more fully expressed, 'in the combination of these ideas—God the Father, Providence, the position of men as God's children, the infinite value of the human soul—the whole Gospel is expressed.' ² M. Loisy, rightly, lays stress on the 'Kingdom of Heaven' as the primary point in Christ's teaching. But the belief in the Parousia forbids us to identify this Kingdom with the historical Church; and the Messianic conception of it broke down: 'ultimately the Kingdom is nothing but the treasure which the soul possesses in the eternal and merciful God.' ³ By the substance, then, of Christianity—*das Wesen des Christentums*—we are to understand the ideas that have taken shape in Christian theology under the varying conditions of time and space and in the course of history. The fact of this shaping stares us in the face. The Christianity of the Apostolic Church is already other than that of the Christ of the Synoptic Gospels; and the process is never-ending. Patristic, mediæval, modern Christianity, each has its distinctive connotation: how different is our own standpoint from that of a hundred, of fifty, or even of twenty years ago! Nor, if we reflect, could it be otherwise. The mind is a unity, and knows nothing of watertight compartments; religion stands in necessary and vital contact with the knowledge and general consciousness of the time. 'Theology is the establishing of a harmony between the Gospel and the theories of the age.' ⁴ Conventional orthodoxy ignores this; hence the *impasse* in which it lands us. This *impasse* is, perhaps, most clearly recognisable in Roman Catholicism—hence the widespread unrest in the Catholic body of which the acrimonious attack on M. Loisy's book is a symptom—not because it is peculiar to that form of Christianity, but

¹ Harnack, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, p. 8.

² *Ibid.*, p. 44.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁴ Wernle, *Die Anfänge unserer Religion*, p. 369.

because the Roman Church, from the scale on which it exists and from the rigorous logic of its theology, exhibits as it were, 'writ large,' the characteristics that it shares with other religious systems less conspicuous and less consistent than itself. The premisses of popular Catholicism, which do not, after all, differ very materially from those of Protestantism of the same type—a strong view of inspiration, the text of Scripture taken uncritically, a surface and unscientific knowledge of history—lead in the hands of a skilful disputant to startling conclusions. This is the secret of the continuous, if numerically insignificant, stream of converts from the various Protestant bodies; this is the strength of the extreme, or Ultramontane, section of the Church. Assent passes by its own impetus from one position to another. New claims are shown to be involved in those already admitted; dogma by a natural and inevitable logic gives birth to dogma, till, plausible as the Catholic theory may appear, it is self-refuted. Actual Catholicism is its *reductio ad absurdum*; the standpoint of the Syllabus of Pius IX—war to the knife with knowledge, society, and civilisation—is reached. Here, if we are not forsaken by all the gods, we cry halt. The Fallibility of the Infallible has been demonstrated: we must 'bear to doubt.' Consistency is bought too dear at the price of splitting up life into two disparate quantities: common sense preserves most of us from the fallacy of logic, than which no fallacy is more fallacious; for the more rigorously we reason from imperfect premisses the wider of the truth are the conclusions at which we arrive. Life is, and must at all costs be conceived as, a unity; idealism is shattered when its content not merely transcends but conflicts with experience; the twilight of the gods passes into darkness; we go out into the night. Here, for those who will be at the pains to understand him, Professor Harnack is not a mere theologian, but a religious teacher: no one has a right to lose faith in the world, in man, and in God who has not weighed the position which the 'Wesen des Christentums' represents. We find ourselves in a blind alley. Well, we must go back upon our premisses to see what unauthorised

assumption has been let pass, what false step taken; criticising to reconstruct; withdrawing, if need be, to advance; we must discriminate, analyse, discern. In many respects, no doubt, the positions of popular theology are untenable. But it does not follow from this that religion is an illusion, or life without significance; that we are without God in the world. The method is historical throughout. 'This implies the recognition, exposition, and presentation in terms of knowledge of the essential and permanent element in the phenomena, even when this appears under the most incongruous and inadequate forms. In the discharge of such a task, errors are unavoidable; but history, treated as archæology, is dumb.'¹

'History, treated as archæology, is dumb': this is true of religions as of secular history; it differentiates living science from dead. We cannot separate the letter from the spirit: so separated it becomes a letter that kills. The Gospels do not give us stenographic reports of Christ's discourses; the events of His ministry were not written down at the time by a special correspondent and miraculously transmitted to us. They have fared as other documents have fared; rather, they have been exposed to greater vicissitudes in proportion as the interests which they represented are more universal and more intense. They contain history, but this history presents itself to us as a problem. 'Our present Gospels are primarily books of devotion. Their relation to their historical content is singularly complex and involved.'² On this point scholars, Catholic and Protestant, are at one. 'The Gospels were not written with the simple object of giving the facts as they were; they are books composed for the purpose of evangelisation.'³

'Il Vangelo è una storia *edificante*, sul tipo di quelle scritte da Plutarco,' says P. Semeria: 'i Vangeli sono il frutto maturato in un ambiente; e la loro autorità storica non nasce tanto dall'essere ciascuno all'ombra d'un nome

¹ Harnack, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, Preface.

² Holtzmann, *Neutestamentliche Theologie*, i. 127.

³ Harnack, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, p. 14.

grande, quanto dall' essere tutti sotto la garanzia delle primissime generazioni cristiane.'¹

M. Loisy puts it more strongly :—

Il ne reste dans les Évangiles qu'un écho, nécessairement affaibli et un peu mêlé, de la parole de Jésus ; il reste l'impression générale qu'il a produite sur ses auditeurs bien disposés, ainsi que les plus frappantes de ses sentences, selon qu'on les a comprises et interprétées ; il reste enfin le mouvement dont Jésus a été l'initiateur.

And he tells us that even such passages as Matthew xi. 27, Luke xvii. 21, 'ont chance l'un et l'autre d'avoir été influencés, sinon produits, par la théologie des premiers temps.'² The former, it is true, has a certain Joannine colour ; the latter refers to the presence rather than to the spiritual nature of the Kingdom of God. But, generally speaking, we must distinguish. The specific terms and formulas of a later age—*ἐκκλησία*, Matt. xvi. 18 ; *λύτρον*, Mark x. 45 ; the Trinitarian form of baptism, Matt. xxviii. 29—placed in the mouth of Christ are no doubt to be received with a certain reserve. 'Io ho supposto,' says so cautious a critic as P. Semeria, 'che le parole registrate in S. Matteo (xvi. 17–19) così come giacciono—*se non quanto alla lettera, quanto allo spirito*—sieno state pronunziate dal Cristo'³—they represent rather truth of idea than of fact. But such reservations must be made with caution : a sufficient reason for their employment in each case must be shown. Christ, it is true, became not man in the abstract, but this particular concrete man, in a particular period and environment, and no other. But great men deal with their environment sovereignly.

Others abide our question. Thou art free.
We ask and ask—thou smilest and art still,
Out-topping knowledge.

¹ *Dogma, Gerarchia, e Culto nella chiesa primitiva*, pp. 3, 395.

² *L'Évangile et l'Église*, xix. xx.

³ *Dogma, Gerarchia, e Culto nella chiesa primitiva*, p. 200.

There is ground on which we put off our shoes from off our feet. 'On raconte qu'Angelico de Fiesole ne peignait qu'à genoux les têtes de la Vierge et du Christ. Il serait bien que la critique fît de même, et ne bravât les rayons de certaines figures devant lesquelles se sont inclinés les siècles qu'après les avoir adorées.'

'L'Évangile et l'Église,' which, though Rome has so far preserved a politic silence, has been formally censured by the Archbishop of Paris, and consequently not reprinted, is exciting as much and the same kind of controversy in France as 'Essays and Reviews' did a generation and more back in England. This controversy throws a curious sidelight on Roman Catholic unity, the more so as P. Semeria's 'Dogma, Gerarchia, e Culto nella Chiesa Primitiva,' a work which, though less technical than M. Loisy's, proceeds on the same lines, appears under the highest Roman *imprimatur*, that of the Master of the Apostolic Palace. But it has a significance beyond this. M. Loisy is one of the very few Catholic *Gelehrte*. He is the one Biblical scholar of whom the Roman Church can boast whose writings appear in German bibliographies and are quoted by theologians of repute. It is permissible to differ from him, but a modest man will do so with deference; to criticise him, but the critic, if he knows his subject, will criticise him as a learner and with respect. That such a man should be thrown to the wolves of a ruffianly religious press is an indecency, a folly going beyond a crime. Wisdom, we can but reflect, is no longer associated, as in the days of Solomon, with temporal prosperity: a man situated as M. Loisy is situated must choose—he has chosen—between the two. He is not a voluminous writer; his thought is condensed, his expression concise. He makes no parade of learning: he does not indulge in rhetoric; there is no attempt at effect or edification. But every word is weighed, and tells; there is not a sentence that is not the result of full and laborious reading, and does not embody knowledge assimilated as well as acquired. He is seen, perhaps, at his best in his volumes on the canon of the Old and New Testament, or in his admirable 'Études Évangéliques.' 'L'Évangile et l'Église' is less objective; it is an attempt

on critical lines to defend an ecclesiastical position which, without greater modification than the author is willing—at least, explicitly—to concede, is defensible only at the expense both of critical and evangelical truth. Few will contest his main position. He sees in certain critics, of whom he takes Professor Harnack as representative, a tendency to find the Christianity of our own time in the historical Gospels. And he argues against this tendency, first, that these Gospels are a fact, and possess an objective existence independent of our conception of them; and, secondly, that, reflecting as they do, not our environment but that of their compilers, the attempt to read into them the religious ideas of to-day is an anachronism. These contentions are valid and timely. The besetting sin of theologians—and modern theologians are not always free from it—is to manipulate their sources, to see them as they would have them be rather than as they are. It is to be regretted that the reminder should have been put into the shape of a criticism of Harnack, to whom M. Loisy, unconsciously, of course, is not always fair. No one would suppose from ‘*L’Évangile et l’Église*’ that Harnack had described the Gospels as an Apocalyptic message based on the Old Testament; insisted on the Kingdom of God and the higher righteousness; protested, with regard to the development of Christianity—‘*“pathologisch” ist hier nichts*’; and maintained that the disappearance of primitive Christianity was a necessary condition of the survival of Christianity itself.¹ No one urges more strongly that Christ must be viewed not in Himself only, but in His work. ‘A complete answer to the question, What is Christianity? is impossible as long as we are restricted to Jesus Christ’s teaching alone. We must include the first generation of His disciples as well—those who ate and drank with Him—and we must listen to what they tell us of the effect which He had upon their lives.’² And again: ‘Just as we cannot obtain a complete knowledge of a tree without

¹ *Dogmengeschichte*, vol. i. 41; vol. iii. Preface to third edition; *Das Wesen des Christentums*, pp. 9, 34, 45; *Dogmengeschichte*, i. 73.

² *Das Wesen des Christentums*, p. 6.

regarding not only its root and its stem, but also its bark, its branches, and the way in which it blooms, so we cannot form any right estimate of the Christian religion unless we take our stand upon a comprehensive induction that shall cover all the facts of its history.’¹ From another point of view it will appear to many that M. Loisy, in his anxiety to shield the Church, has overlooked the uniqueness of her Founder ; that he has not laid sufficient stress on the distinction between later ecclesiastical Christianity and the personal teaching of Christ. That the latter is not without a certain time and place colour is true. But this colour is of the slightest. As pure gold cannot be coined, so in religion, as elsewhere, the pure idea escapes our apprehension ; but in the Gospels we find it with the minimum of alloy. This is because they give us religion only : theology and organisation are, comparatively at least, absent from them ; it is in germ only—and the germs are easily recognised—that they appear. And religion, as a fact of spiritual experience, is of all things the most simple and immediate : hence the power of a purely religious teaching, and the peace that it imparts. When we pass beyond it, inevitable as the passage is, we are in a different atmosphere. Organisation means secularism, theology conflict. System succeeds system ; for theology is the expression of religious experience in the thought of a particular time ; and, as this is ephemeral, every theology bears in itself necessarily the seeds of decay. M. Loisy would not question this. ‘Que les dogmes soient divins par l’origine et la substance, ils sont humains de structure et de composition’ ;² he insists on the inevitableness of their development ; he conceives Christianity ‘comme une semence qui a grandi, d’abord plante en puissance, puis plante réelle, identique à elle-même depuis le commencement de son évolution jusqu’à son terme actuel, et depuis la racine jusqu’au sommet de la tige.’³ Nowhere has this development had freer play in certain directions than in Roman Catholicism, and M. Loisy is not

¹ *Das Wesen des Christentums*, p. 7.

² *L’Évangile et l’Église*, p. 159.

³ *Ibid.*, p. xxix.

unaware that some at least of its products are sufficiently equivocal. 'Les définitions du Vatican se sont dégagées en quelque sorte de la réalité : mais si le mouvement centralisateur qui y a conduit semble arrivé à son terme, la réflexion théologique n'a pas dit encore son dernier mot sur le sujet. On peut croire que l'avenir fera, touchant la véritable nature et l'objet de l'autorité ecclésiastique, des observations qui ne manqueront pas de réagir sur la mode et les conditions de son exercice.'¹ He admits the necessity of a criterion ; with regard to the legitimacy of a development, 'toute la question est de savoir si le commentaire est homogène ou hétérogène au texte.'² But the uncertainty of this text reflects itself in the development : 'un écho, nécessairement affaibli et un peu mêlé,'³ is an ambiguous and inadequate test. What has been, it may be urged, will be ; as the mind of the past has moulded the dogmatic constructions of the Roman Catholic Church, so will that of the present and of the future ; 'il est inconcevable que leur avenir ne réponde pas à leur passé.' This may be so, though the signs of the process are not very visible ; but meantime the existing generation of Christians is left under the pressure of the 'dead hand.' M. Loisy's conception of development tends, like certain forms of Hegelianism, to canonise the actual. 'Whatever is, is right.' This is to leave out of account the Power behind the world process : the working of the Spirit in the Church and in men. The judgments of this Spirit will, we believe, realise themselves—though we do not know how or when—in the world without ; but they are valid here and now in the world within. 'There is an interior freedom which may grow up side by side with an allegiance fostered by birth and custom, by prejudice and piety.' This may and should be ours. By it we pass from the iron circle of necessity which hems us in into an ideal world, reflecting to us unshadowed and unrefracted the truth that makes us free.

This freedom is, indeed, in the last resort inevitable,

¹ *L'Évangile et l'Église*, p. 158.

² *Ibid.*, p. 128.

³ *Ibid.*, p. xx.

because the nature of mind is what it is. It cannot be holden ; the chains that can confine it have yet to be forged. The principle of authority promises great things—truth, certainty, unity. But it promises only—it cannot perform. It cannot inspire religious belief, for in religion we possess only what we have made our own. Belief is experience : an element of experience, at least, enters into belief. And experience must be experienced : a proposition shot at us, like a bullet from a pistol, remains a foreign body outside consciousness and external to the self. Again, authority and thought are incommensurable. Authority belongs to the surface of life, where, indeed, it cannot be dispensed with. But below this it fails us ; lay stress upon it, think it out, and it breaks down. It is powerless to cope with the subtlety of thought—a ghost is impervious to a cudgel ; or to keep pace with the advance of knowledge—Canute cannot arrest the flowing tide. Nor is the survival of dogmatic religion inconsistent with this. Dogma is the creation, not the basis, of theology ; and theology is the product of many factors—above all, of the spirit of the time. Apparently unchanging, it is of all things the most changeable. With regard to the controversies of the present, those within the Churches differ as much as those without ; with regard to the controversies of the past, they agree upon a formula, but behind the formula lies the interpretation. The surrender of freedom is nominal only : the tongue assents ; the mind remains, and must remain, free. If, for example, we ask with regard to any given point what the general or average belief of Catholics is, it is easy to answer. But if we go behind this, and ask more precisely what the Church as such teaches us of faith concerning it, it is difficult or impossible : the Vincentian Canon gives way under us like treacherous ice. In the third century the Consubstantiality of the Son was not of faith ; in the fourth the eternity of punishment ; up to 1854 the Immaculate Conception ; up to 1870 Papal Infallibility. In the sixteenth century the deposing power of the Pope could not be denied without suspicion of heresy ; till quite lately, by some perhaps even now, it would be thought

temerarious, or worse, to question the literal inspiration of Scripture, the direct creation of species, the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, the Davidic of the Psalms—and the list might be extended indefinitely. Are the Encyclicals of Leo XIII infallible utterances? In England generally the answer would be, No; in Rome many, if not most, would answer, Yes; and certainly some of them seem to fall under the conditions laid down by the definition of the Vatican Council. Again, there are decisions admittedly not infallible which are held, nevertheless, to demand interior assent: there is an obligation, that is to say, to believe undoubtingly what may possibly turn out to be untrue. ‘Communes opiniones nascuntur et moriuntur,’ say the canonists; and the maxim is as true in theology as it is in law. But the dead return to life. Jouffroy’s ‘Comment les dogmes finissent’ was followed two generations later by Caro’s ‘Comment les dogmes renaissent.’ Sabatier’s formula is truer than either—‘Les croyances religieuses ne meurent pas; elles ne font que se transformer.’¹ But this transformation is so rapid and so complete that a theologian may refuse, and be justified in refusing, to pledge the Church to an indefinite amount of her actual teaching. The day will declare it: those who come after us will know whether it is idea or setting, of eternity or of time. Meanwhile authority is unwilling to commit itself; while obliging the conscience, it remains free. From the point of view of those who cannot ‘bear to doubt’ nothing could be more unsatisfactory; it is confusion worse confounded.

In the modern Roman Church dogma is primarily a legal decision, to which submission is demanded. To the question, What is dogma? no definite answer can be given. Instead of a number of dogmas precisely defined and, as dogmas, on an equal footing, we have an interminable series of dogmas, half-dogmas, doctrinal decisions, pious opinions, probable propositions, and the like. Dogma has become a system of law placed at the disposition of the Pope, carried out administratively, and losing itself in endless casuistry.²

¹ A. Sabatier, *Esquisse*, p. 23.

² Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, i. 9.

Proteus-like, it assumes new shapes under our eyes, and evades our grasp ; and here, perhaps, is the outlet from the Polar pack-ice to the open sea. If the claim to infallibility attracts minds of a certain type, the underlying ebb and flow demonstrate its unreality, and provide a way of escape to kindlier climes. For while concerning the fundamental truths of religion—the meaning of life, the distinction between good and evil, God and His kingdom—doubt would be equivalent to mental and moral paralysis, and, consequently, certainty has been given to us, or at least placed within our reach, when we pass beyond them it is not so. Here the evidence at our disposal is often ambiguous and inconclusive : we can better say what the facts are not than what they are. For they are known ‘in part’ and seen ‘through a glass, darkly’ ; uncertainty with regard to them belongs to the discipline of our state. And the claim to knowledge which we do not possess reacts disastrously on religion. Where it is admitted, it emphasises the non-essential ; for it is the clothing of the idea, not the idea itself, that appeals to the senses : where it is rejected, it involves the true and the false in common discredit ; for the generality of men do not draw nice distinctions ; the structure as a whole is undermined.

Such considerations as these, and perhaps the fact that theological science, languishing elsewhere, flourishes in the free air of the reformed Churches, have caused a certain set of the tide against the institutional in religion : the ecclesiastical phase is one, it is held, through which Christianity has passed, but which it has now definitely left behind. This is sometimes assumed too easily. It is difficult at times to reconcile the claims of Law and Gospel ; but it must not be forgotten that Christianity began in the latter, and was compelled, by circumstances which have not ceased to exist or to be operative, to pass over into the former stage. ‘He has arrived *ex errore per veritatem ad errorem*’ is Harnack’s criticism of the ablest and most uncompromising defence of what may be called the anarchic standpoint in religion ; the social side of Christianity cannot be overlooked. It was impossible that an organisation should fail

to spring up among the brethren ; the question was not whether there should be an organisation, but of what nature the organisation should be. Many forms were possible ; many were attempted. The communities put out feelers, and proceeded in the way of the least resistance ; the fittest survived. Religious, or ecclesiastical, institutions are peripheral, true ; but the circle has a periphery as well as a centre : in themselves indifferent, when in possession they have in their favour eleven points of the law. Nor is the antagonism between the spirit and forms absolute. 'The spirit, like air or water, can fill any form, if only it is received. You may, indeed, have bottles without wine ; but it is difficult to have wine without bottles. Life always makes itself a form to dwell in. The body without the spirit is dead ; but the spirit without the body is vagabond.' The Church had reason against the Montanists, though they represented her first traditions more faithfully than she did herself. She adapted herself to her circumstances, suffering loss—and that no small loss—in the process ; but self-preservation, impossible at a lesser price, was her reward. A system adapted to the requirements of a small and enthusiastic sect was impossible for a world-wide society embracing whole- and half-believers, fervent and indifferent, strong and weak. To become once more the Church of the Catacombs the Church would have had to return to the Catacombs ; to attempt to take the ground of the Church of the Apostles' days is as idle as to pretend to make an old man young. No external order or setting is essential to Christianity : circumstances and expediency, though excluded from the sanctuary of religion, bear rule in its courts, and excess, whether of insistence on or of dissent from what is indifferent, is out of place. They are wisest who conform as though they conformed not ; not lingering in the precincts, but passing through them to the shrine. For the vital thing here is not to confound the relative values of the elements that make up our belief and practice. Like the prophet, we are apt to contemplate the less worthy parts of our deities ; forgetting that while the idea, if it is to sustain and propagate itself, must be realised in concrete matter, in

this realisation it becomes other than itself. Would we see it as it is ? We must separate it, in thought at least, from its material conditions ; yet remembering the while that, so separated, it is an abstraction ; that the Divine Light never descends unclothed.

The religious history of mankind is a unity ; it is impossible to cut ourselves adrift from the past. When we speak of a new departure it is a question of more or less. While change is a law of life, to which religion in common with other departments of human experience and activity is subject, the change which Nature enjoins is measured and orderly ; it comes about, as the seed grows, while men sleep. The most sincere Catholic will grant that there was need of reform in the mediæval Church, though he may disapprove of the reforms actually effected ; the most convinced Protestant will admit that the breaking-up of the historic fabric of Christendom was an evil, though, given the circumstances, it was the means of securing a greater good. Many, if not most, of the questions which have divided Christians would have been met by St. Paul with an impatient ‘ Doth God take care for oxen ? ’ They belong, it would have appeared to him, to the province of the infinitely small. It is well to take the religious environments in which we find ourselves as part of the Providentially existing social order ; a thing which we did not make, and cannot to any appreciable extent directly mend. The perfect commonwealth, we call it Utopia—No man’s land ; the Church of the firstborn, without spot or wrinkle, it is in heaven, not here. Yet in neither sphere is it good for us to be alone : we are by nature citizens ; in society we give and gain. Mr. Montefiore’s ‘ Liberal Judaism ’ is a singularly sympathetic and suggestive exposition of this standpoint. Nor is it as strange as it may appear that such an exposition should come to us from a non-Christian source. It is not in Christianity only, but in religion as such, that these questions are urgent, that the old bottles are straitened by the new wine. Judaism, though not in one sense of the word a dogmatic, is an historical and legal, religion, and it is no longer possible for educated Jews to accept the traditional

account of its origins, or that of the ritual observances which it enjoins.

It is here that people are beginning to ask themselves, 'Can we still be Jews?' For the old Judaism taught that God had specially revealed Himself to a particular race, and to this race only; that this revelation was accompanied by miracles and wonders, and that the contents of it were contained in a Law which was perfect, immutable, and divine. The old Judaism taught that the words of the Hebrew Bible were all 'true,' that its 'miracles' really happened, that its writers, and more especially Moses, the author of the Pentateuch, were divinely and supernaturally inspired. . . . Now the new Judaism, it must be frankly owned, believes none of these articles. Reason, the source of which is God, creates the disbelief. Thus the new Judaism does not believe that *all* the words of the prophets are true, it does not believe that Moses was the chief of the prophets, or that the whole Law is Mosaic, and it does not believe that the whole Law is eternally binding upon Jews. It believes that in disobeying and modifying a great deal of that Law it is acting in accordance with reason, and therefore with the will of God.

Yet, 'while recognising the magnitude and bearing of these differences, we must not exaggerate them. The new or liberal Judaism may still, I think, call itself *Judaism*, and not merely liberal and new.'¹ The essential doctrines of Judaism were proclaimed by the prophets of the eighth, seventh, and sixth centuries before Christ; the Law was partly a survival of customary tribe law, partly a construction of the Jerusalem priesthood, dictated by mixed motives, political, personal, religious. That the legal prevailed over the prophetic teaching is one of the paradoxes of history; its triumph was the result of circumstances upon which it is impossible to enter here. But it was secondary in itself; this is the point made by St. Paul against Jews and Judaizers;² the conflict between the two conceptions of religion runs through the Old Testament as a whole.

The Liberal Jew can only look at the Law from the historical point of view. He has to consider its genesis,

¹ *Liberal Judaism*, pp. 87-9.

² Galatians iii. 17.

the process by which it came to be what it is. He will hold that an ordinance which was of value two thousand years ago is not necessarily of value to-day. . . . But he will not refuse to obey a law, or regard its public observance as undesirable, merely because it is a ceremonial law, or merely because he can no longer believe that it was divinely revealed to Moses by God. Its observance may still be desirable from different motives.¹

The departure from the legal standpoint, though a gain, is not perhaps a pure gain. A staff is of use, though crutches be discarded: and we cannot create institutions; we must avail ourselves of, while endeavouring to spiritualise, those that are to hand. As life ripens, not to say decays, around us, it is brought home to us that we must suffer some things with which we are out of sympathy quite gladly for the sake of the whole.

No one has a right to withdraw himself from outward communion with his brethren on the inadequate plea that, owing to his liberal views and his 'critical' estimate of the Pentateuch, the feasts and holy days of Judaism no longer appeal to him. Providentially, as we may not improperly say, they depend on conceptions so broad and essential, so rooted in human nature, that the date and manner of their institution are of quite secondary importance. . . . It is true that there are difficulties . . . but these difficulties it is partly within our power to lessen and remove, and partly they should be tolerated for the sake of a greater and more permanent good. . . . If the difficulties are partly imaginary, partly soluble, and partly temporary, how can any liberal Jew be justified in abandoning Judaism? How can he even justify a mere listless and nominal adherence to his own conscience? ²

Mutato nomine de te
Fabula narratur.

The argument is of wider application. Secession is no new thing in religious history; but it is not the finer natures that secede. The best way to lead the higher life—or, in theological language, to 'save one's soul'—is not to think too much about it: there is such a thing as being righteous.

¹ *Liberal Judaism*, p. 125.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 165, 208.

overmuch. Those are the most religious who are so unconsciously ; who believe in general as those about them believe, laying stress, however, less on the points on which Christians differ than on those on which they are agreed. ' *La vérité est comme les femmes capricieuses que l'on perd, dit-on, pour les trop aimer. Un certain air d'indifférence réussit mieux avec elles.*' The controversies, past and present, which have distracted Christendom have been of doubtful benefit to Christianity. With tact and temper many, perhaps most, of them might have been avoided ; and, looking back at them, we see that not all the right was on one side. And we look for the ultimate triumph of good, of which faith assures us, the ' God all in all ' of the Apostle, not so much to the preponderance of one set of theological opinions or one ecclesiastical polity—this is not easily brought about ; and, were it possible, its results might be other than we imagine—as to the gradual leavening of the world and mankind by the Spirit, the slow but sure advance of virtue and knowledge. We need not, then, be either unduly cast down or unreasonably elated by the vicissitudes of fortune or the fluctuations of opinion : these movements are of the surface and transient ; they neither retard nor accelerate the steady flow of the tide. In moments of depression we forget this. Truths which we hold dear are losing ground, it seems, in the world. Systems and institutions in which we have grown up, and without which we cannot conceive society in Church or State holding together, are, or appear to be, undermined. It may or it may not be so ; but the end is certain : it is out of the clash of arms that freedom, it is out of the conflict of ideas that truth, is born. And those who, from love of truth here seen imperfectly, have taken different sides in those disputes which, ' above all other interests, seem to have for a time the power of absorbing men's minds and rousing their passions,' do well to ' carry their thoughts onward to the invisible world, and there behold, as in a glass, the great theological teachers of past ages, who have anathematised each other in their lives, resting together in the communion of the same Lord.'

XI. HISTORICAL CHRISTIANITY

THE idea of the reunion of Christendom has a not unnatural attraction for many minds. The narrowness of modern sects contrasts unfavourably with the spaciousness of mediæval Christianity ; and the particularism of national Churches, at best a compromise between the two, shares the common fate of compromises. Compromise is the creature of circumstance : when circumstances change, and it has served its purpose, it falls into disrepute. Reunion, however, in the shape in which it presents itself to enthusiasts ; belongs rather to the realm of vision than to that of reality : the reduction of the various elements which compose the Christianity of to-day to one external polity is neither to be expected nor desired. We can scarcely conceive the Churches rallying either to the Book of Common Prayer or to the Westminster Confession : while the Papacy, which, under favourable circumstances, might have served as a centre, has isolated itself. Imposing as is its historical bulk, and numerous as are its adherents, its growth is arrested ; it has lost touch with life. The times have changed, and not the world only but the Church has changed, with them ; the unity of Christendom must be conceived under a new form. Undivided, by which is meant mediæval, Christianity stood in essential relation to mediæval society ; the Holy Roman Empire was the condition and complement of the Holy Roman Church. The disappearance of the former brought about, if not the disappearance, certainly the transformation of the latter : it became one among many Churches ; it was no longer the One Church. And, this apart, the modern State and, in general, modern society are more highly organised than ancient or mediæval ; and

the balance between the several forces that constitute them is correspondingly more delicate. Religion is one, but only one, of these forces: nor must it be forgotten that, admirable as they may be on their religious side, the aims of religious corporations are seldom purely religious. An international religious organisation would too easily gain an undue preponderance, and become a menace to the harmony and development of society as a whole.

But if corporate reunion is a dream, it is one which it is good, if not to dream, at least to have dreamed: like the Messiah hope in Jewish history, the idea which it represents has a lasting value and may be realised outside the limitations of its form. It is not only that there is a soul of the Church, an interior unity among good men however externally separated, but that a basis of positive fact is being arrived at with regard to which experts are at one, and on which the superstructure of theological opinion, take what shape it will, must be built. Hence two permanent gains: the establishment of a common foundation, and the limitation of possible divergence; history is a canon to which variations must conform and by reference to which they must be tested. It is obvious, for example, that the recognition of the part played in early Christianity by the belief in the Parousia affects the Catholic doctrine of the Church, and a historic appreciation of Paulinism the Protestant conception of sin and justification. It is impossible to draw a hard-and-fast line between history and dogma: either the facts must be manipulated to meet the theory, or the theory stretched to cover the facts. As history becomes better known, the former alternative becomes impossible; and theologians are reluctantly driven back on the latter. It is difficult to foresee how far it will take them—farther, perhaps, than they suspect; but, for the time, it is in the ascendant. What has been the result? Not a fusion of the Churches. Catholics continue Catholics and Protestants Protestants; nor is it likely that these historical distinctions will be effaced. But we are coming to see that they lie on the surface of things, and are to a great extent matter of time, place, and temperament;

that the real lines of division lie deeper, and are based on other considerations than these. That this is so is due mainly to criticism, and in particular to the historical criticism of the last thirty years. The critic has a doubtful reputation in orthodox circles : criticism is—to borrow an expressive phrase from theologians—‘offensive to pious ears.’ It destroys, it is thought, for destruction’s sake ; riding roughshod over tradition however venerable and sentiment however legitimate ; substituting prose for romance, indifference for enthusiasm, taking the bloom from religion and the flavour from life. Well, critics are many, and it might be rash to assert that none have laid themselves open to charges of this kind. The detection of falsehood may become an end in itself—wrongly ; for it is only in so far as we can replace it by truth that its detection is profitable ; failing this, we do but substitute falsehood for falsehood : a new for the old wrong. ‘Wer keine Ueberzeugung hat, lügt immer, er mag sagen was er will.’¹ Again there is a good as well as a bad opportunism. ‘There are religious opinions, absurd in themselves, which cannot be surrendered without danger ; because they have elicited conscientiousness, humility, and devotion ; or because these virtues cling to them as the vine to the trellis.’²

Critics, however, are one thing ; criticism is another : independent of the former, the latter pursues its path, elaborates its methods, and advances towards its end. The question of origins is vital. What was Primitive Christianity ? What was the soil in which it took root ? What were the conditions under which it developed ? The first step to an answer was to sift the material—to discriminate, to interpret, to digest. Before this work was taken in hand it lay unsorted—a confused mass of history and legend, text and commentary, representing the literature, the religion, the science, the folklore of the ancient world. It is a mistake to think only of the Middle Ages in this connexion : the culture of antiquity was indeed in its decadence when Christianity became a power ; but, such as it was, it passed over bodily into the Catholic Church. Hence her

¹ Harnack, *Reden und Aufsätze*, ii, 376.

² *Ibid.*, p. 379.

power over human nature : she represents not one past epoch, but the past as a whole. It was natural that the first results of this criticism should be wanting in finality. The yoke of tradition is so heavy that a certain limitation of view is inevitable in the generation that escapes from it ; it is a later age that sees the past in its true colours, and appreciates it at its real worth. Those who have felt its burden resent it too keenly to be impartial. The Encyclopædists, for example, underestimated the complexity of the phenomena, conceiving as clear and simple what was in fact obscure and intricate : the Tübingen school, fruitful and epoch-making as it was, relied overmuch on formulas, and thought to open all locks with one key.

More, perhaps, than any one man, Professor Harnack represents the reaction against the inadequate hypotheses and premature conclusions that were current half a century ago. The nature of this reaction has been misunderstood. It has been argued in certain quarters that the earlier criticism has been refuted by the later ; and that the traditional position, if not rehabilitated, is well on the way to rehabilitation. It is difficult to take such assertions seriously. The traditional position is as dead as the Ptolemaic astronomy : the idea of its resuscitation belongs to the world of dreams. The later criticism is in two respects, and two only, a reaction against the former : it has disposed once for all of the Voltairian legend that Christianity was the invention of a fraudulent priesthood ; and it has assigned an earlier date to the canonical books of the New Testament, and generally to ecclesiastical dogma and institutions. Catholicism—by which is meant not Roman Catholicism only, but dogmatic and institutional Christianity as a whole—was not indeed the original form of Christianity, but it was a very early and, under the circumstances, an almost inevitable modification of it. There was a time when it was not—to borrow the Arian formula : but it is difficult to arrest this time ; we catch it fleeting and on the wing. The rapidity and completeness of its transformation supply Catholic theologians with a weapon which they have not been slow to use with effect. Is it not inconceivable, from a religious point of view, that


the Gospel should have been brought into the world to perish in a generation? and, from an historical, that it should have passed over into something so diametrically opposed to itself? Like begets like; but here it has begotten unlike: the birth is not in the nature of things. The Protestant who attempts the struggle for life in the medium of ecclesiastical history will find himself, says Newman, in an element in which he cannot breathe. 'So much he must grant, that if such a system of doctrine as he would now introduce ever existed in early times, it has been clean swept away as by a deluge, suddenly, silently, and without memorial. Strange anti-type, indeed, to the early fortunes of Israel!—then the enemy was drowned, and "Israel saw them dead upon the sea-shore." But now, it would seem, water proceeded as a flood "out of the serpent's mouth," and covered all the witnesses, so that not even their dead bodies "lay in the streets of the city." . . . He must allow that the alleged deluge has done its work; yes, and has in turn disappeared itself; it has been swallowed up in the earth, mercilessly as itself was merciless.'¹ But theories, however plausible—and this theory is excessively plausible—must yield to facts: and the facts are as fatal to the theory for which Newman was arguing as to that which he denounced. Primitive, by which he meant Patristic, Christianity was certainly not Protestant: there he proved his case up to the hilt. Just as certainly, however, Primitive Christianity, in its genuine form, was not Catholic: it was the common root from which Catholicism and Protestantism, with their various sects and offshoots, came. Nor—observe the sophism—was the note of identity lost in that of difference: striking as are the manifestations of the latter, the former subsists, and is 'spiritually discerned.' The Gospel did not perish: planted in the heart of mankind, it took on new forms as mankind developed. Look at the history of religion from without, and you may miss it; from within, and, varying as is its setting, it is there. The relation of form to content is not one of

¹ Newman, *Historical Sketches*, i. 417; cf. *Development of Christian Doctrine*, 7.

opposition so much as of contrast: they are different, indeed, but interdependent. An anti-Origenist writer, Marcellus of Ancyra, in a notable phrase taken by Harnack as the motto for his 'Dogmengeschichte,' draws attention to the human element inseparable from the notion of dogma. Τὸ δόγματος ὄνομα τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ἔχεται βουλῆς τε καὶ γνωμῆς.¹ The thought is capable of, and demands, a wider application. As dogma has a human origin, the Gospel, subsisting as it does among men, has a human side. The search for an abstract—that is, an unrelated—Gospel is predestined to failure; there is no such Gospel; there never was, there never will be. The union of the Divine and the human is the key not only to the Person of Christ but to Christianity. 'The Gospel can enter into combination with all that is not sin. It did so with Greek philosophy. Why not with the monarchical episcopate, with Roman law, with the Papacy itself? provided that these things are not made part and parcel of it.'² Its history is a history of such combinations—of positions exchanged, of standpoints successively gained and abandoned. Hence its twofold note: unity in diversity. Neither can be overlooked; the significance of neither can be overestimated. The parable of the leaven illustrates their union: the leaven enters into the meal, at once transformed and transforming; it seems to have lost its identity, but it leavens the whole lump.

It cannot be said that this position has been thoroughly acclimatised among us. The English mind is practical; and—having the defects of its qualities—suspicious of ideas. It holds to facts; forgetting that what we call a fact is often an imperfect generalisation of experience, and that it is in ideas that the truth of things resides. No German theologian expects to find the Confession of Augsburg in the New Testament: we shall not, if we are wise, attempt to discover in it the Westminster Confession, the Thirty-nine Articles, or even the Catholic Creeds. Such an attempt issues necessarily in confusion and mis-

¹ *Apud Eusebium c. Marc.*, i. 4.

² Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, i. 305. 

understanding : these symbols have a history and a justification ; but they belong to a later period than that of the New Testament and must be defended on other than Scriptural grounds. To recognise this is to recognise that the history of Christian beliefs and institutions has to be rewritten. The sources, which bristle with problems, must be tested and criticised ; a new perspective and orientation must take the place of the old. If this perplex and depress us, the perplexity and depression are but for a time. The attestation of religion is not to be found in its so-called 'Evidences,' but in the spirit ; for 'only spirit recognises spirit.'¹ When the insecure structure of symbolism, dogmatic and institutional, breaks down, we are thrown back upon the eternal verities. They are strong enough to sustain us : the theologian had reason who bade his pupils have faith in criticism—and in God.

To his criticism as such, the critic's religious standpoint is indifferent : but it is not an impertinent curiosity which leads us to ask how the religious problem is worked out by those who have analysed its terms. In the 'Wesen des Christentums' Harnack defines his attitude to the central question. He conceives religion as a fact of spiritual experience : a relation between God and the soul, realised in various forms and in greater or less measure, but in itself unchangeably the same. The book is one of the most memorable of our generation : it cleared the air. For centuries religion had been associated by believer and unbeliever alike with a mass of propositions—historical, scientific, psychological, political, &c.—some true, some uncertain, some demonstrably false, but all essentially non-religious. Hence confusion of thought and obscuring of issues. Religion was made to stand or fall with alien and heterogeneous subject matter—the authenticity of this or that text, the occurrence of this or that event, the correctness of this or that inference : a writer of religious fiction represents not Christianity only but the whole spiritual and moral sense of mankind as shattered by the successful forgery

¹ Cf. Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, p. 338.

of a contemporary document recording the removal of the body of Jesus by the disciples from the grave. The Catholic is suspicious of inquiries into the origin of the Papacy; the Anglican of questions as to the rise of the monarchical episcopate; the Protestant of the history of the Canon of Scripture. Such fears are at once idle and unworthy. The discussions by which they have been aroused are inevitable; but they belong to the varying and historical setting of Christianity, not to its eternal substance. Not till this is recognised will religion dwell at ease in her tents.

The addresses and essays contained in Professor Harnack's 'Reden und Aufsätze' extend over a period of some twenty years, and embrace such subjects as—

Legend as a source of history.

The Confessions of St. Augustine.

The idea and history of monasticism.

The significance of Luther in the history of knowledge.

The Apostles' Creed.

Christianity and history.

The present condition of Protestantism.

The present state of research in early Church history.

What we have to learn and what not to learn from the Church of Rome.

Ritschl and his school, &c.

They do not contain, as did the 'Wesen,' an explicit statement of the writer's religious standpoint, but they illustrate it indirectly from various sides, and, in some respects, more fully than the earlier book.

The Gospel—by which is meant the personal teaching of Christ—has passed through four great transformations: (a) from its original shape into Catholicism; (b) from Catholicism into the compact structure of Mediævalism; (c) from this in the sixteenth century into Protestantism; and finally (d) in our own time into a larger and more spiritual atmosphere, a standpoint rather than a creed, representing the temper of Christ in many respects more nearly than did the ecclesiasticism of the intermediate periods. The second and third of these transformations are the more important for political history; the first and fourth

incomparably the more vital for religion and thought. In none was there an abrupt break with the past ; the new issued from and was conditioned by the old, the process falling easily enough into the categories of the Hegelian dialectic. The history as a whole indicates two conclusions : (1) that the lines on which mankind is advancing are not those of ecclesiastical or dogmatic Christianity ; (2) that the Gospel is independent of these lines, that it is passing beyond and will survive them. It is the merit of Professor Harnack to have illustrated these theses with the learning of a theologian and the earnestness of a religious teacher ; the union of these qualities gives him his distinctive position and strength.

I

The opposition between the Gospel and later ecclesiastical Christianity lies deeper than the surface text of Scripture, the appeal to which has so frequently and so vehemently been urged as decisive. That this is so is shown by the fact that after centuries of controversy of this kind the points at issue have not passed beyond controversy, the passages by which they are established or refuted being still, as of old, tossed to and fro by contending theologians in sterile and unending sport. The explanation is that the question is one not of authorities but of standpoint. And history is decisive of standpoint ; the standpoint of a particular time or place is historically discerned. If, for example, the mediæval conception of the Papacy as directly and immediately instituted by Christ is rejected, it is not on account of this or that interpretation of Matthew xvi. 18, 19, but because it is seen that, given the circumstances of speaker and period, such an institution is unthinkable ; if the belief in the inspiration of Scripture has become attenuated, the result is due not to any new exegesis of such passages as 2 Timothy iii. 16, 2 Peter i. 21, &c., but to an increased knowledge of the influences and conditions under which the inspired books came into existence and the canon assumed its present form. The appeal to tradition is, in the main, an appeal to ignorance.

What did the Middle Ages know of early Christian history, of the history of Christ, of that of the Apostolic age, of the persecutions, of the origin of Catholicism or of the Papacy, of the revolution that took place under Constantine, of the rise of the State, or Empire, Church? It is no exaggeration to say, less than nothing. On the one hand, the memories of the past were dim and uncertain; on the other, a monstrous and unchecked growth of legend, crushing everything but itself out of existence, overran the soil. . . . It was taken for granted that in the time of St. Peter and the early Roman bishops everything in Rome and in the Church was as it is now. This assumption, which lay like a winding-sheet over history, was the inevitable result of the legend formation referred to; and it established itself in an incredibly short space of time. Since then the past of the Church has been regarded as a reflection of her present.¹

Assumptions are suspect: but the opposite assumption, that nothing in the past of Christianity was as it is in the present, would be nearer the truth.

The key to the Gospel standpoint is twofold: the attitude of Christ towards contemporary Jewish religion; and the belief in the Parousia. With neither of these is this projection of the present into the past compatible; it is not only that the thing was not so, but that by no possibility could it have been so. It is inconceivable that the denunciation of the old and the construction of a new law should have proceeded from one and the same teacher: this were self-contradiction; a building again of what had been destroyed. It was the legal temper as such, not this or that particular law, which was foreign to the Gospel. Here Paul read the Master rightly; the antithesis was between law and grace. Again, the belief in the Parousia was inconsistent with any but the simplest and most temporary organisation, with anything like provision for the future of the Church. There was, and could be, no future; the Lord was at hand. Such was the teaching of the Synoptic Christ; such was the belief of the Christian community.² There

¹ Harnack, *Reden und Aufsätze*, i. 5, 8.

² Matthew x. 23, xvi. 28.

was no ground for institutionalism: the ground was cut away.

It was impossible, however, that Christianity should remain in this amorphous stage. After the destruction of Jerusalem Judaism ceased to be a serious antagonist: the Pauline polemic against legalism, never perhaps wholly intelligible or acceptable to the average Christian, fell into the background; the key to its meaning was lost. The belief in the Parousia broke down under the test of experience; no community could permanently maintain an attitude of expectation towards a miracle which did not occur. The numerical increase of believers made organisation and external observance necessary. The charismata, the distinctive note of the first age, declined: the question was not whether a process of fixing or externalisation was to set in, but what shape it was to take. This was decided by the circumstances of the time and place; the Græco-Roman world of the Empire. The translation of Christianity from a spirit to an institution began on Jewish soil. When Jerusalem met Galilee the air lost its freshness; the freedom of the hills, the spaciousness of their horizons was gone. But we must go beyond Judaism to account for the completeness of the transformation. Christianity was a world, not a local, problem; it became a world, not a local, Church. Baur and his followers were the first to emphasise the need of going below the surface of the history. 'The highest praise has been awarded when we confess that the main problem, the rise of Catholicism, was first rightly defined by this school as problem . . . and that, following the only true method, it discovered at once the clearest and surest point with which all inquiry must begin — Paul and Paulinism.' Since its rise science has become richer in historical points of view. Catholicism, we see, was the result not only of the varying relations between Jewish and Gentile Christianity, but of the contact of the Gospel with ancient civilisation. 'The ancient world built up the Catholic Church on the foundation of the Gospel; but in so doing it built itself bankrupt.' This saying of Richard Rothe, observes Harnack, is the egg of Columbus. 'What

a store of historical knowledge is packed into it ! Only if it be carefully applied in all branches of Church history will this history be really understood.’¹ The determinative principles of Ritschl’s ‘*Entstehung der altkatholischen Kirche*’—now unfortunately out of print—have found general acceptance, and represent the point of departure of modern research. These principles are :—

(a) The divergence of the Christianity of the sub-Apostolic from that of the Apostolic age is to be explained by the fact that the Gentile Christians either did not know or did not understand the Old Testament beliefs which the Jewish Christians possessed.

(b) The Gentile Christians brought into Christianity the religious interests, hopes, and aspirations which animated them ; and could accept at first only some of the fundamental ideas of a Gospel which rested on the Old Testament.

(c) Where, therefore, we find among the Gentile Christians any peculiarities of doctrine, cultus, institutions, &c.—and such peculiarities occur from the very first—we must not, in order to explain them, draw in the Pauline theology, still less Jewish Christianity, but must consider as factors—(1) certain fundamental thoughts in the Gospel ; (2) the letter of the certainly not understood Old Testament, which the Jewish Christians treated as a collection of divine oracles ; and (3) the state and institutions of the Græco-Roman world at the time of the first preaching of the Gospel.

(d) The resultant, the Catholicism which has in the third century become fully formed, is therefore not to be understood either through Paulinism or through Jewish Christianity, or apprehended as a compromise between the two ; but the Catholic Church is rather that form of Christianity in which every element of the ancient world has been successively assimilated which Christianity could in any way take up into itself without wholly losing itself in this world.

If these considerations be borne in mind, the difficulties presented by the history of Christian dogma and institutions are, if not solved, at least on the way to solution. The constituents of historical Christianity—that is, of

¹ *Reden und Aufsätze*, ii. 220–30.

Catholicism—are not to be found in Galilee and Jerusalem alone, even if Alexandria be thrown in ; but in Greece, at Rome, and generally in the ancient world as a whole.

II

The passage from the earlier, or patristic, to the later, or mediæval, Catholicism was not so much from old to new as from less to greater definiteness : it was rather an explication than an evolution in the proper sense of the term. The Church of the Fathers, rapidly as it underwent the catholicising process, retained traces of its former freedom, though less frequently and less distinctly as time went on. The Episcopate, the fixed creeds, the canon of Scripture, were slow to establish themselves in certain communities—notably (with the exception of Asia Minor and Constantinople, where stereotyping influences, spiritual and secular, were dominant) in the East. In Egypt and Syria the old freedom died out slowly : at Carthage, authoritative as was the African temper, it flashed out in Tertullian and even in Augustine. ‘*Ecclesia spiritus per spiritalem hominem, non ecclesia numerus episcoporum*’; and “*differentiam inter ordinem et plebem constituit ecclesiæ auctoritas et honor per ordinis consessum sanctificatus. Adeo ubi ecclesiastici ordinis non est consessus et offers et tinguis et sacerdos es tibi solus.*”¹ Again, ‘*Numerus ille justorum qui secundum prepositum vocati sunt, ipse est (ecclesia). . . . Sunt etiam quidam ex eo numero qui adhuc nequiter vivant aut etiam in hæresibus vel in gentilium superstitionibus jaceant, et tamen etiam illic novit Dominus qui sunt ejus. Namque in illa ineffabili præscientia Dei multi qui foris videntur intus sunt, et multi qui intus videntur foris sunt.*’² It is impossible to fit such sentiments into the mechanical conceptions of later theology : the divergence is too radical to be bridged. The evolution of religious beliefs may be compared with that of the fauna and flora of a continent : Christianity emerges from a conflict between competing and incompatible

¹ Tertullian, *De anima*, xi. 21 ; *De Monog.*, 7.

² Augustine, *De Bapl.*, v. 38.

candidates for existence ; the weaker perished, the stronger survived. This strength and weakness are of course relative to the particular stage of the struggle : an idea too great at a given time for its environment may perish temporarily but prevail in the long run. Rome stood from the first for centralisation : the triumph of this tendency was in effect the conquest of Christianity by Rome. This conquest, politically if not religiously the most momentous in history, has been variously estimated and accounted for. It was provided for, urges the Catholic, by the promise of Christ to Peter, and is of the essence of religion and society. It was the downfall of the Gospel, answers the Protestant ; the victory of anti-Christ over Christ. Such estimations and solutions lie outside history : the historian will judge the event by other standards, and account for it by other causes than these.

It is difficult for a later age and a new civilisation to realise what Rome meant to the ancient and mediæval world.

Rome, par des prodiges de vertu civique, a créé la force dans le monde ; et cette force, en réalité, a servi à propager l'œuvre grecque et l'œuvre juive, c'est-à-dire la civilisation. La force n'est pas une chose aimable, et les souvenirs de Rome n'auront jamais le puissant attrait des choses israélites et grecques ; l'histoire romaine n'en fait pas moins partie de ces histoires qui sont le pivot des autres, et qu'on peut appeler providentielles, parce que leur place est comme marquée dans un plan supérieur aux oscillations de tous les jours.¹

Such was the function of Rome in history ; and its discharge was provided for by a corresponding prestige. This prestige was as unlimited as it was commanding. Outside was barbarism ; Rome was not only the centre, it stood for and was the equivalent of the civilised world : what was found elsewhere fragmentarily and in isolation was contained in it in plenitude and in union with the other elements which constituted civilisation as a whole. What could be more inevitable than that this conception should pass over into the Church ? that when the Gentiles, at first barely tolerated,

¹ *Histoire du Peuple d'Israël*, I. iv.

became in virtue of their numbers, wealth, and attainments the predominant partners in the Christian community, they should have brought into it the sympathies, the instincts, the patriotism of their past ? To the fanatic Jew, taking as his ideal separation from all that was not Jewish, the Empire was the abomination of desolation, standing where it ought not. The Gentile judged more justly ; he saw in it the greatest and most efficient instrument for the good of mankind that the world had yet seen. It gave its subjects peace, security, law, and such liberty as could be granted without injury to larger than individual interests. The writer of the Acts of the Apostles brings out the wisdom and equity of Roman administration : Gallio is a representative type. The world went well when such men, reasonable, just, indifferent, were its rulers : and, independently of the later weakening and final transfer to the East of the Imperial Government, the traditions of place and temper made a *communicatio idiomatum* between the secular and the religious easy. Hence the primacy of Rome. The Roman Church was the World-Church to the particular Churches, as the City was the World-State to the nations under its sway. This primacy was no mere theory ; not theories but facts welded the Christian communities, often stubborn and recalcitrant, into one. Before the monarchical episcopate, which developed in Asia Minor earlier than in the West, had established itself in the city of the Caesars, the Roman Church spoke with authority, and had put forward an unmistakable if inchoate claim to the *potior principalitas* among the Churches. Empire was, and is, in the soil : ‘ L’ autorità papale esige perentoriamente una sede universale,’ says a recent writer. ‘ Roma sola ha nel mondo tradizioni così auguste, così grandiose, da essere la meno insufficiente alla maestà veneranda del successore di Pietro. Fuori della cinta di Roma, il Pontefice sembrerebbe perdere qualcosa della sua grandezza : ogni altro luogo è angusto per Lui. . . . Oggi Roma è la città nuovamente elaboratrice del pensiero mondiale, e intorno a lei rifulge l’ aureola di madre della civiltà. Fuori di lei potrà trovarsi la ricchezza, l’ intensità di vita, il fervore dei commerci, la febbre dei

guadagni. In lei, e in lei sola, la misteriosa suggestione di una esistenza storica, ricca e complessa, benefica ed austera, inimitabile.’¹ That Rome should be the seat of the Papacy is matter of life or death. This idea, however misconceived, lies at the root of the struggle for the recovery of the Temporal Power; the Vatican sees more clearly, perhaps, than its opponents, that a transplanted Papacy is a contradiction; that a Pope in Malta, at New York, or at Jerusalem would be no longer Pope. The notions, Roman and Catholic, tended from the first to fuse into one another: the Church of the Universal Empire was universal or Catholic; the source and centre of this Empire, and, it came to be held, of this Church, was Rome. The Emperors, non-Christian as well as Christian, encouraged this centralising tendency; the Petrine tradition, with which in course of time the Pauline associated itself, did but confirm an existing and extending usage. With this qualification Renan’s dictum—‘Pierre et Paul (réconciliés), voilà le chef-d’œuvre qui fondait la suprématie ecclésiastique de Rome dans l’avenir. Une nouvelle qualité mythique remplaçait celle de Romulus et Remus’—may be accepted; the legend lent the halo of religion to the fact. Theologians are on indisputable ground when they maintain the antiquity of the Roman primacy: what they overlook is the foundation on which it was built, which was not Peter but Rome. But it is as old as the hierarchy, the creeds, the sacramental system, and the whole institutional side of Christianity: it has as much and the same kind of Scriptural warrant; it is the outcome of the same historical and psychological process; together these things stand—or fall.

The Roman Church survived the Roman Empire, whose fall at once enhanced her pretensions and gave her greater power to enforce them than before. She stood for that older Rome, the

Madre Roma, signora in tutti i liti

of the poet,² which lived on in idea, immortal, stimulating

¹ *Questioni Politico-Religiose: Osservazioni di un Prelato Romano*, p. 40.

² Carducci, *Juvenilia*, 49.

the imagination and the heart of men. She had retained many of its best qualities—public spirit, the instinct of authority, the sense of law. The rude nations with whom she had to deal were awed by her majesty: the story of Attila retiring from the siege of Rome at the bidding of Leo the Great in fear of the drawn sword of the Apostle that overshadowed the Pontiff is 'legend, but true legend': the idea underlying the narrative is that of the moral pressure exercised by Roman and Christian culture on a barbarian king.

Where true legend was insufficient to support the superstructure in process of formation, the aid of false was freely invoked. 'The time when Gregory IX consolidated the canon law, that fertile source of fabulous ideas of history, is well known to coincide with a general failure of historical insight and veracity which operated wellnigh as strongly upon the actors in the events of this period as upon its chroniclers. Fictions were everywhere accepted as truth and used recklessly to explain existing facts; and among these fictions two had a diffusion and influence which it is difficult to overestimate.'¹ One of these was the Donation of Constantine, by which that prince was alleged to have abdicated his imperial authority in the West into the hands of the Pope—the abdication was represented later as an act of restitution, and the original donation as made by Christ to St. Peter, this being the received exegesis of Luke xxii. 38; the other, that of the Translation of the Empire from the Greeks to the Franks by an official act of Leo III. The *Venerabilem* of Innocent III put forward this audacious falsification of history as a cardinal fact in the relation of the Church to the World.² The fact was moulded to the theory; in the new construction the Pope was at once Pontiff and Caesar. Dispute as Guelf and Ghibelline might over terminology, the vital point was conceded in the very terms of the alliance. The spiritual sword, as such, had the pre-eminence: the function of the Imperial was to register and enforce the decrees of the Triple Crown. The

¹ R. Lane Poole, *Illustrations of the History of Mediæval Thought*, p. 249.

² Cf. Döllinger, *Kaiserth. Karls des Grossen*, 297.

intrinsic logic of the situation placed the secular power at a disadvantage, in its long conflict with the ecclesiastical : given the premisses, reason was with the Pope. In stirring lines addressed to Gregory VII, Alphanus of Salerno brings out the central thought.

Take the First Apostle's brand,
 Peter's gleaming sword in hand ;
 Break the rude barbarian's might ;
 Let the tribes of ancient night
 Bear the old yoke for evermore.

Thine the keys that loose and hold :
 Victories that in days of old
 Caesar's craft or Marius' power
 Gained in battle's bloodstained hour
 See ! a word obtains for thee.

Rome by thee exalted high
 Sings thy triumphs gratefully :
 Scipio's self no loftier praise
 Won, nor bloomed in ancient days
 Garlands better earned than thine.

It is the Latin genius lording it over lesser races, and content with nothing short of universal rule. 'If a man consider, he will easily perceive that the original of this great ecclesiastical dominion, the Papacy, is no other thing than the "ghost" of the deceased "Roman Empire," sitting crowned upon the grave thereof. For so did the Papacy start up on a sudden out of the ruins of that heathen power.'

III

Whatever judgment be formed of its embodiment, the idea of the Reformation is easily grasped. The intimate and momentous alliance between Christianity and classical civilisation of which Catholicism was the expression could not come about without a certain obscuring of the original Gospel.

What is the Reformation but the work of God, which was to set the Church free again from the bondage which had bound her to the ancient world for 1400 years ? All may be expressed in the single formula : the Reformation is the return to the pure Gospel. Only what is sacred shall

be held sacred ; the traditions of men, though they be most fair and worthy, must be taken for what they are, namely—the traditions of men. Yet, in recognising this, let us not condemn the old Catholicism and the whole development of the Church up to the Reformation. Everything has its time and every step in the history of the Church was needed. It was God's Providence that so guided the development of the Roman Empire that it resulted in that wonderful covenant between Christianity and the ancient world which endured nearly 1500 years. When it had done its work this covenant was dissolved ; and it could be dissolved because the Church in her New Testament possessed Scriptures which have nothing to do with that covenant, because they are older than it. There lies the abiding value of the New Testament.¹

This reminder is opportune. It is not only that not all the elements in Christianity are of equal value ; but that it is possible for mischievous or even deadly germs to lodge in the organism. Not everything that comes about under Providence is providential : the expulsion of these germs may be called for at all costs. Whether this was so in the sixteenth century is the question on the answer to which our judgment of the Reformation depends. We cannot, indeed, return to the Christianity of the first days ; those days, with their requirements and possibilities, are gone. But this Christianity retains its regulative value ; by conformity, not indeed to its letter, but to its spirit, later developments of religion must be judged.

The character of the Mediæval Church was formed by her circumstances. She was at once World-State, school, and '*Versicherungsanstalt*' :² the first in her exterior polity ; the second for those who in religion as in other things were children ; the third against the vague but awful possibilities of the future for men who, while desirous of the promises of the Gospel, were strangers to its power. The Church of Rome preserves these notes to-day. The first has become a source of weakness to her, because the morality of the secular State has advanced beyond that of the ecclesiastical : as polity, this Church, 'instead of being a purely spiritual

¹ Harnack, *Reden und Aufsätze*, ii. 233.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 250.

organisation, is practically a huge political machine worked for mundane ends.' The second and third constitute her strength, the charm by which she retains her hold on the senses, the imagination, the fears of men. Were we all intelligence or all virtue, her day might be near its end. But intelligence and virtue are but ingredients in our nature. Now, as ever, the average man prefers tutelage to independence in religion, the latter involving an effort to which he is unable or unwilling to rise ; now, as ever, the future haunts him, and he is attracted by an institution which, for a moderate present outlay, makes itself answerable for the inevitable passage into the unknown.

O that thy creed were sound !

For thou dost soothe the heart, thou Church of Rome

wrote Newman before his secession. And when heart and head come into conflict, it is seldom the latter that prevails. An institution, however, which appeals to feeling and custom to the exclusion of understanding, far as it may be from dissolution, is in a state of decline. It lives on its past, assimilating no new material ; gradual as may be the divergence, its path and that of mankind diverge. The Church is a static force : the dynamics of life are foreign to her ; she resisted them as long as resistance was possible, and accommodates herself under protest to the new world which she anathematises and hopes against hope to destroy. No single claim of the Mediæval Papacy has been, or will ever be, withdrawn. Her approximation to the new order of things is provisional—*temporis ratione habita*.¹

ἡ γλῶσσ' ὁμώμοχ' ἡ δὲ φρὴν ἀνώμοτος.

She bides her time. Pity that so much energy and perseverance should be wasted ! She waits in vain ; because the world does not go back.

The conflict between this conception of Christianity and that held by the northern nations was in the nature of things. Not only did Catholicism remain mediæval ; it became more and more exclusively Latin. Mediævalism

¹ Concordat with Austria, art. 13, 14.

and Latinism are its distinctive notes. As the Middle Ages, therefore, receded into the background, it became obsolete ; and as civilisation ceased to be Latin it lost its universality. The practical abuses of the system would not have resulted in its break-up had not an interior fermentation been at work, a conflict of opposing sympathies and incompatible ideas. The antithesis between letter and spirit became acute. Never had the yoke of the past pressed so heavily upon Christendom as in the period that immediately preceded Luther. Beliefs and institutions live not on their defects but on their qualities : the mediæval system had prevailed because it met the wants of men more or less satisfactorily. But, as these wants changed, its hold on the world weakened : it did not, perhaps, it could not, change. It would be a mistake to attribute this impotence only, or even chiefly, to the obscurantism and cupidity of the clergy. Its roots lay deeper. Catholicism, as has been said, had taken over the inheritance of antiquity ; and now this inheritance was exhausted : a new departure had to be taken by a new world. Could not this departure have been taken from within ? Separation from the main body of Christendom was a loss not only to sentiment : the spaciousness, the sweep and swing of the old Church were gone. With all its merits there was something provincial about Protestantism : the schism could be justified only by the impossibility of attaining the end in view by other means. It would be rash to forecast the future of Catholicism. But men have to act for to-day, not for to-morrow ; and in the sixteenth century what was obvious was that the reform movements which had been attempted from within had failed. The effort to re-establish the conciliar system had broken down under the uniform and persistent pressure of the Papacy ; the Franciscan revival of evangelical religion had been absorbed in the routine of ecclesiasticism ; the Renaissance had entered on its decadence before it received its death-blow from the ‘ brutale Hispanisierung Italiens,’ for it was of its essence that it was a return to antiquity—the genuine, indeed, as opposed to the ecclesiastical counterfeit—while what was wanted was not a return to the old

but a way out into the new. This threefold failure made the Reformation possible : what actually brought it about was the necessity of escape from bondage and falsehood into freedom and truth. The emancipation was obtained at a great, some may think a too great, price ; but it was obtained.

No Scottish or English Reformer holds the place in popular imagination occupied by Luther. Nor is this surprising ; for no one man embodies the temper of the Reformation—its spiritual disquietude, its impatience of tutelage, its appeal from the periphery to the centre—as he. Then as now, many excellent persons found peace in the Church. But this is not the point. The age did not and could not do so. There was room and to spare in Catholicism for those who could be religious without thinking about religion : those were straitened who were unable to partition off their minds in watertight compartments, who were impelled by an interior necessity to co-ordinate, however provisionally, their experience as a whole. Were these to be left to oscillate between scepticism and exterior conformity ? The latter alternative was, no doubt, open. It is a mistake to suppose that under ordinary circumstances Catholicism is exacting in its demands on its adherents. The axiom *Ecclesia non judicat de internis* is capable of, and receives, a large interpretation : conformity covers a multitude of sins. Non-religious, however, in itself it is powerless to satisfy religious needs. The experience so vividly described in the Epistle to the Romans was that of countless men and women in Christendom : the distant God, the burdened conscience, the sense of doom. And what Paul and Augustine had been, each in his generation, that Luther was : an element of ferment and disturbance ; a voice proclaiming to a degenerate race the greatness of its fall, the imminence of its destruction, and the means of salvation placed within reach of all. Did he teach any new truth ? The question is as idle in his case as in that of religious teachers greater than he. The fire was there, but it smouldered under the ashes : not till these were removed could it

kindle into flame. The effect of the Reformation was to break down artificial barriers : it restored man and the world to God. They were His, and only by a fallacy could they be separated from Him ; the three were essentially akin. The faith that saves was a recognition of this kinship : it was 'no submissive assent to ecclesiastical dogmas ; it was neither an opinion nor a manner of life, but a personal surrender of the heart to the all-embracing God.'¹ This God manifested Himself not in the sphere of religion only, but in nature and in life. Hence a new orientation. The 'Weltflüchtigkeit' of mediæval religion bound men hand and foot. It is difficult to overestimate the liberation brought about by its rejection. The conscience of Christendom was distorted : non-ethical obligations—asceticism, celibacy, &c.—lay heavy upon it ; the conventional stifled the moral. Luther dealt with ceremonial bondage of this kind as Christ had dealt with the old ritual law—*καθαρίζων πάντα τὰ βρώματα* (Mark vii. 19), and this, in particular, with regard to the central point of sexual morality. 'Marriage was no longer a concession granted by the Church to the weak ; but the free and divinely appointed union between man and woman, needing no ecclesiastical patronage or apology, the highest ethical school.'² He had the courage to inculcate this truth by example as well as by precept ; thus providing his opponents with a weapon which they were not slow, after their kind, to use. Its worth is rhetorical, not real. The immorality is on the other side. What shall we say of a system which takes boys and girls ignorant of the simplest laws of physiology, hypnotises them by the ascetic idea, and condemns them to curtailment of life, material and moral, debarring them from love, home, children, and all that makes existence human, linking it through its humanity to the Divine ? The outcry raised against Luther's marriage rests on two assumptions : the first, that celibacy is morally the higher state ; the second, that the law enjoining it was generally observed by the clergy secular and regular of his time. That the former is unfounded is perhaps as certain

¹ Harnack, *Reden und Aufsätze*, i. 154.

² *Ibid.*, i. 161.

as a moral truth can be ; that the latter is equally so is a matter not of opinion but of fact. The Popes who framed and enforced the existing discipline were statesmen, not fanatics ; they foresaw the inevitable consequences of their legislation, and chose them as, from their point of view, the lesser of two evils ; the individual was to be sacrificed to the system, the fact to the idea. Efforts at reform had not been wanting. At the Council at Basel in 1434 John Bishop of Lübeck proposed ‘*ut sacerdotibus Christi uxores restituerent*’—note the term ‘*. . . inutiliter uxores esse præreptas sacerdotibus : vix inter mille unum reperiri continentem presbyterum, omnes aut concubenarios aut adulteros aut quod pejus est inveniri.*’ ‘*Res erat complurimis accepta*’ adds the narrator, Æneas Sylvius, later Pius II ; ‘*sed tempori non conveniri judicata. . . . Quidam senes damnabant quod assequi non poterant. Religiosi, quia voto astricti erant, haud libenter audiebant presbyteris secularibus concedi quod sibi negaretur.*’¹ Hence a social evil of incalculable extent and complexity : and the effects of the supposed obligation on those who observed, or attempted to observe it, were often more disastrous than on those who transgressed. Nature in the long run revenges herself on those who disregard her laws. ‘*La legge del celibato può essere per alcuni organismi (prendiamo la cosa da igienisti) una camicia di forza che o sarà infranta o sarà causa di gravi malori. Quante follie di sacerdoti, quanti perturbamenti nervosi derivano da un vincolo di castità a cui si vuol obbedire, sacrificando esigenze fisiologiche ? C’è qui evidentemente un pericolo che bisogna ad ogni costo evitare.*’² The time had come to separate the conventional in ethics from the real ; to concentrate moral effort on moral subject-matter, diverting it from the unmoral or immoral. A strong hand, a stout heart, must be his who would undertake the task ! a task that runs so counter to the prejudices, the fears, the virtues even, if the weaker virtues, of men. ‘*Deux sortes d’hommes méprisent l’opinion ; les scélérats et les saints.*’ Luther certainly does not fall under the former

¹ Fea, *Pius II. a calumniis vindicatus*, Romæ, 1823, p. 57.

² *Questioni Politico-Religiose : Osservazioni di un Prelato Romano*, p. 59.

category ; and if we hesitate to place him in the latter—saints are few—he had at least one of its characteristics, he never feared the face of man.

The Reformation synthesis was weaker than its analysis. Nothing is more difficult than to keep knowledge and conduct in touch ; yet nothing is more essential : a purely spiritual religion is for purely spiritual men. ‘Alles was unseren Geist befreit, ohne uns die Herrschaft über uns selbst zu geben ist gefährlich,’ says Goethe. The danger has not been wholly escaped by Protestantism, which, tested by religious results, is open to criticism on more than one side. As compared with Catholicism, it has been less of an obstacle to progress, material, and intellectual ; morally, though it has laid stress on the natural virtues, so called, rather than on the supernatural, and so set up its own standard, there is probably little to choose between the two. But the Church knows human nature better : Catholicism is the religion of the concrete, Protestantism of the abstract man. Hence in practice, and taking mankind in the mass, the former is the more successful. The average man, be his belief what it may, is indifferent ; and the indifferent Protestant loses touch with religion more easily than the indifferent Catholic ; Protestantism demands more effort than he is able or willing to make. He slips, in consequence, more easily through its meshes : Catholicism is more accommodating ; it deals with men on their own level and addresses them in their accustomed tongue. If this be a source of weakness on one side—

Ye cannot halve the Gospel of God’s grace—

on another it makes for strength. The Church is human, and counts nothing human foreign to herself. Nor is her strength due only to her hold, be it worth what it may, on the half-hearted : she strikes more effectively than Protestantism the specifically religious note which stirs the imagination and fires the heart. Matthew Arnold contrasts the *Memoirs of Eugénie de Guérin* with those of Miss Emma Tatham, of Margate ; it is difficult to picture a Presbyterian Francis of Assisi or an Anglican Curé d’Ars.

A price has been paid for this superiority. The sense of the supernatural has too often degenerated into superstition ; devotion has been brought down to the level of the vulgar, or below it ; and thus Catholicism has fallen out of touch with the best factors of modern life to an extent to which Protestantism has not. But, on the religious side, the latter has not a little to learn from the former. Harnack specifies four heads—Worship, Sacrifice, Confession, and Monasticism—under which the unreformed Churches have retained elements of value which the reformed have lost.¹ The sacramental system, if not evangelical, is marvellously adapted to human nature, on a long and intimate knowledge of which it is founded ; if it has been productive of immense evil, it has been productive also of immense good. It requires sifting and discrimination : as it exists it is open to abuse and abused. But it goes far to make the attraction of Catholicism : it is in virtue of the sacramental principle that the Church appeals to the idealising side of our nature ; to the enthusiast as well as to the indifferent, to the spiritually aspiring as well as to the morally weak. She subsists more than we think on the shortcomings of her opponents : ‘ Sie lebt noch weil dei Modernen Fehler machen und nicht alle Bedürfnisse zu befriedigen verstehen.’

These shortcomings, it may be urged, resolve themselves into this, that the idea of Protestantism was greater than its reality. This may be said of any human institution or formula ; but in the case of the Reformed Churches a special weakness came in. They went either too far or not far enough. They used science and scientific methods as far as these told against Rome, and then dropped them ; forgetting that reason has an inherent movement, and carries men with it whether they will or no. The position was inconsistent : hence the strength of Catholic controversy. It is not only temperament and circumstances that lead men to ‘ask for the old paths.’ These motives, indeed, must be taken into account. There will always be

¹ Harnack, *Reden und Aufsätze*, ii. 253–9.

converts to Catholicism, as there will always be converts to Christian Science ; and for the same reasons : the significance of the conversions being much the same in each case. But the logic of the Roman Church is far from being a negligible quantity. As long as one stops short of analysis of the premisses, it is irrefutable ; conclusion follows conclusion ; there is no escape from the chain. Given a strong view of inspiration, a surface knowledge of Scripture and Church history, with a taste for syllogisms, the *Unam Sanctam* and the Syllabus of Pius IX follow. The nearer Rome the variety of Protestantism from which the departure is taken, the more obvious, but not the more necessary, is the conclusion ; that it is not more generally drawn is due not to any defect in the argument, but to the fact that men think confusedly and act from other than logical motives. There is as much Scripture proof for Papal Supremacy as for Baptismal Regeneration or the Real Presence ; and Rome has on her side that continuity which goes for so much both in fact and in law. In accounting for the various Catholic or Catholicising reactions that have taken place since the Reformation this greater perspicuity of Catholicism, and the kindred fact that certain philosophical tendencies—*e.g.* Positivism—have been worked in its direction, must be borne in mind. The argument no doubt cuts both ways. There are those who when faced by the alternative, all or nothing, fall back on the latter, not of choice but of necessity. What is called anti-Clericalism is not necessarily irreligion ; it is oftener than not an attitude taken up because no alternative between two equally impossible extremes is seen.

The tendency of criticism is to demonstrate the existence of such an alternative ; hence its religious value. That the Reformation was a moment in human progress will not be questioned : to have thrown off the yoke of the hierarchy was a clear gain. Extravagant as were the pretensions of the Protestant clergy, as *e.g.* in Scotland and at Geneva, they were short-lived ; with the Mass and Confession the roots of Sacerdotalism were cut away. But to have fallen back from the Church to the Bible, if a gain, was

not an unmixed gain. It was a gain in so far as it regulated a too exuberant tradition by reference to an earlier and purer standard. But the content of Scripture is not of one texture; it was no advance to exchange the ethics of the Inquisition for those of Joshua and the Judges, or the dialectic of the schoolmen for that of St. Paul. Again, Scripture, being a document, not a living voice, was less flexible than the Church, and—here was the essential point—not a whit less external; the ancient wrong done to spirit, by subjecting it to authority, was not redressed, but replaced by another wrong. Spirit is its own authority, but the times were not ripe for this to be recognised. When the appeal made to the individual conscience by the wilder sects ended, as it was bound to end, in anarchy, Catholic and Protestant alike pointed to its results as a new argument for control. Not till a collective judgment could be formed could a real step in advance be taken; and not till sufficient material had been acquired could this judgment be formed. In our own time this condition has been verified. Every generation has its own standpoint. ‘Till the eighteenth century religion was based on tradition; in the eighteenth on reason; in the first half of the nineteenth on speculation; throughout, the part played by history was secondary; there was always a higher tribunal to which an appeal lay.’¹ With us there is none; history is the pivot on which all turns. Hence an at least approximate standard. The notional difficulties in religion—such as those connected with the origin of evil, with immortality, with the problems of theism, &c.—are insufficient to disturb faith, however much they may trouble the imagination, because they have their origin in the nature of our understanding. Intellectually insoluble, because the laws and procedure of the mind are what they are, they are solved by living through them; feeling and the moral sense supply the answer for which we interrogate the understanding in vain. ‘Cottage dames’ are as competent as philosophers to deal with such questions; they are ‘spiritually discerned.’ But when history comes in it is otherwise. Here the cottage dame ceases to be an

¹ Harnack, *Reden und Aufsätze*, i. 287.

authority. No degree of moral virtue enables us to have an opinion on purely scientific subject-matter ; the decision must rest with those who know. Criticism is corrected by criticism ; and, as there is no infallible tribunal, it is probable that differences of opinion will always exist on points of detail. But the broad lines of the position have been settled, and settled in a sense incompatible with traditionalism, or any approach to traditionalism ; the question is closed.

An inevitable friction arises from the readjustment of ideas going on around us. It is not felt only on one side. If the believer is perplexed by the solvent action of knowledge on opinion, and exclaims with the pious solitary when convinced of his error in attributing a material form to the Deity, ' They have taken away my God,' there are more than we think who resent the identification of the spirit with the letter, of the faith that saves with the fallacious opinions of men. We realise the scandal given by the Greek to the barbarian ; we do not realise the scandal given by the barbarian to the Greek. Where prudence and veracity conflict, the latter is to be preferred ; we must follow the lead of thought, take us where it will. For no seeming good may we tamper with evidence or play fast and loose with fact. This is Jesuitism ; doing evil that good may come. The temptation to act in this way is, at times, great, for there are questions which can scarcely be raised without danger and apparent irreverence.

The future of religious thought—and religion, though it is other than, can never divorce itself from thought—is not doubtful. Ideas diffuse themselves : like spirit, they penetrate through all barriers and pass all doors. Their ultimate influence on existing ecclesiastical organisations is less certain. Organisations, as such, look to the past, not to the future ; and resist, even where they submit to, change. The looser their texture the less effectual is their resistance ; in the Protestant Churches freedom has practically been won, and as Scripture has been their standard from the first it is improbable that the appeal from its false to its true sense will cause more than a temporary and

inconsiderable strain. With the Church of Rome it is different. Her standard is not Scripture, but tradition; and Scripture as interpreted by tradition. And her attitude towards anything like a reform of theology is unmistakable: its advocates exist in her as a foreign body, and because her endeavours to expel them have, so far, failed. From a practical point of view it is obvious that the Church has everything to lose by this attitude; that the liberalising movement, properly engineered, might do much—especially in Latin countries, where the religious instinct, such as it is, is Catholic—to restore her waning influence and prestige. So obvious, indeed, is this, that the *non possumus* of the Vatican, accentuated as it has been under the present Pontiff, can be accounted for only by the reflection that persons exceptionally acute on their own ground are often exceptionally the reverse of acute outside it, and that Rome is interested in politics, in administration, occasionally perhaps in piety—never in ideas. It is possible, however, that a change of policy, while advantageous to Catholicism, might be of doubtful benefit to religion. Rome stands for the principle of authority, and an increased efficiency given to this principle might react injuriously on the forces that make for liberty. The existence of a liberalising school in the Church is a check, if an inadequate check, on the tendency of authority to run riot, and so in the long run to stultify itself: while the fact that this school exists precariously and on sufferance makes it impossible for the Church to exploit it; the lines on which the two advance are, if not divergent, at least parallel, and never meet. Again, the half is often more than the whole—‘*Rien de plus dangereux que la demi-absurdité; car l’humanité est médiocre; elle vomit le trop fort virus; elle vitote avec la dose de sottise qui n’est pas suffisante pour la tuer.*’ The Catholicism of the ‘*Civiltà Cattolica*’ is, from the point of view of the future, a negligible quantity; the Catholicism of M. Loisy, in less worthy hands than his, might conceivably become a force for evil in the world of thought and things. That what is called Liberal Catholicism is spreading, and will continue to spread, is certain; the Pope can no more check it than Canute could turn the tide. Whether those who identify themselves with

it will continue Catholics in any real sense is another question. Ecclesiasticism is a vanishing, if a slowly vanishing, quantity in religion ; and ecclesiasticism is, or seems to be, co-extensive with Catholicism. As the one declines the other loses its significance : organisation becomes, as in the Reformed Churches, matter of expediency and arrangement rather than of divine right. It is possible that this account of the matter is not exhaustive ; but Huxley's question, What would become of things supposing them to lose their qualities ? suggests itself. The process of defecation may be continued till nothing of the original substance remains. Catholicism, as a distinctive form of Christianity, is capable of a sufficiently plausible natural explanation ; it is very much what we should expect it to be from its history. Are we to interpret its claims by its history, or its history by its claims ? The latter alternative is no longer open to us ; if the former be adopted, how much, it may be asked—and this perhaps is the unconscious explanation of the *non possumus*—is left of the claims ? The framework, in other words, is too small for the facts ; it is impossible to get them into it. Yet this framework is so much of a piece that the attempt to enlarge it is dangerous ; the house, if we touch it, threatens to come down about our ears. The instinct of the Church divines the danger, a danger which does not affect her alone. Admit the conception of Christianity which embodies the Christian idea, as such, in an external form, whether that form be an institution or a book, a priesthood or a dogma, and you have the Mediæval Papacy ; the logical process of construction is inevitable. Question the Mediæval Papacy, and the process of dissolution is equally inevitable. The conception of an embodied Christianity falls to pieces : you are thrown back on a radically different conception of Christianity, in which it appears not as letter but as spirit, not as institution but as idea.

These, however, are secondary matters : *Ecce labora, et noli contristari* is the note of confidence with which Harnack concludes. Those who look at religion from without, from the standpoint of institutions and formulas, may despair of the future ; for, whether these institutions and

formulas survive or perish, the future is not theirs. There are more important questions than whether a man belongs to this or that Church, or holds this or that theological opinion; the kingdom of God does not consist in these things. But while women are loved, and men achieve, and children link heart to heart as they pass the lamp of life with increase from generation to generation, its interests are secure. To idealise is the one thing needful: what we idealise is of less consequence, for in the idea all things are one—

Wherefore, thou,
Worship the Power—in this all creeds agree—
Which from Olympus speaks, or Sinai's brow,
Or beams, diviner, from beloved eyes.

That this sense of the ideal is being developed among us, that the horizons of life are becoming more luminous, that the field of moral effort is enlarging its borders, that we are coming to think more worthily and therefore more truly of God and man—this may inspire us with courage and hope—*Historia non facit saltum: darum Geduld.*

XII. THE AGE OF REASON

THE mixed life, theologians tell us—the life, that is to say, which is at once contemplative and active—is to be preferred to that which is either purely contemplative or purely active. This is so in other provinces than that of religion. The philosopher who has a practical knowledge of affairs is a safer guide than the mere thinker or the mere man of action. The former is apt to degenerate into a theorist, the latter into a framer of expedients. A Herbert Spencer lacks something which the India House gave to Mill ; the name of Gladstone, judge his career as we will, fills a greater place than that of Beaconsfield in English history. At once a thinker and a man of affairs, Mr. Morley represents the mixed life in politics ; and to this twofold qualification for dealing with wide and complex subject-matter he unites a certain largeness of mind and loftiness of temper peculiarly his own. He possesses the rare gift of raising the questions, whether of the past or the present, upon which he touches from the level of controversy to that of principle ; the analysis of the ideas underlying Conservatism and Liberalism respectively given in ‘Compromise’¹ may be referred to as an illustration. He retains his grasp on the whole while dealing with its parts, not losing sight of the idea in its necessarily imperfect embodiments ; he has an eye for the proportion of things.

History and literature have been with him, what they will always be with wise and understanding minds of creative and even of the higher critical faculty, only embodiments, illustrations, experiments, for ideas about religion, conduct, society, history, government, and all other great heads and departments of a complete social doctrine.²

¹ Morley, *Compromise*, p. 123.

² Morley, *Critical Miscellanies*, i. 141.

A generation has passed since these studies of the eighteenth century were first published. Their object was to rehabilitate an age which had suffered many things from critics writing from many standpoints, from the paradox of De Maistre and the rhetoric of Chateaubriand to the 'ingenious and one-sided exaggerations of that brilliant man of letters M. Taine.' M. Taine was this, and a good deal more: but not even M. Taine has said the last word on the eighteenth century. By temperament and attainments Mr. Morley was qualified for the work of revision to which he addressed himself. The disciple and panegyrist of Burke, he is unlikely to leave the solid ground of the concrete for the uncertain realm of abstractions; the author of that somewhat uncompromising work 'Compromise,' he is far removed from that listless folding of the hands for which 'the existing order of facts, whatever it may be, takes a hardly disputed precedence over ideas, and the coarsest political standard is undoubtedly and finally applied over the whole realm of human thought.'¹ The latter, it must be admitted, is the special danger of our country and of our time. It is not necessary to endorse the indictment of England, even in 1870, as—

a community where political forms, from the monarchy down to the popular chamber, are mainly hollow shams disguising the coarse supremacy of wealth, where religion is mainly official and political, and is ever too ready to dis sever itself from the spirit of justice, the spirit of charity, and the spirit of truth, and where literature does not as a rule permit itself to discuss serious subjects frankly and worthily—a community, in short, where the great aim of all classes and orders with power is by dint of rigorous silence, fast shutting of the eyes, and stern stopping of the ears, somehow to keep the social pyramid on its apex.²

Such an indictment, if a paradox which makes for righteousness, is still a paradox. What is true is that both in our national character and in the temper of the age in which we live there is a distrust of abstract reasoning; a disposition to regard questions which affect society from the

¹ Morley, *Compromise*, p. 14.

² Morley, *Critical Miscellanies*, i. 152.

standpoint of expediency, to insist upon continuity both in ideas and institutions, to qualify the conception of what it is desirable to do by the admission of the limits of the possible. This disposition may be a good or a bad thing. We believe it to be a good thing. But, good or bad, it is open to certain dangers ; and Mr. Morley's warning against these dangers, seasonable as it was for the generation to which it was addressed, is neither inopportune nor superfluous for our own.

Artificial as the divisions of time are, they have their character : to every age its own note. The eighteenth century was the Age of Reason, abstract and individual ; the understanding of the individual, it was believed, could solve the great questions of political and economical science, like so many geometrical problems. There was neither doubt nor hesitation : the *tantæ molis erat* of the poet found no echo in the mind of the time. Zealous without knowledge, it underestimated the gravity of the issues set before it. Had it been otherwise it might not—who knows ?—have had the courage to face them. It is possible to see too many sides of the question to take up any one with decision : it is the fanatics, the men of one idea, who act. Generous, youthful, self-confident age ! Producing, unconsciously enough, its facts as it went along, it construed past and future alike in the terms of the present ; magnificently optimistic and audacious with the audacity of ignorance, it had no conception of the multitude, the vastness or the complexity of the phenomena with which it had to deal. When we consider how radically false were the premisses from which the Illumination and the Revolution started, the wonder is not that these movements were accompanied by so much but by so little evil, that they were on the whole beneficent and successful ; that their misdirected energy did not breathe new life into the moribund tyrannies which they proposed to, and did in fact, destroy. Burke's passionate denunciation of sophists and demagogues had this much justification, that the diagnosis of the French *philosophes* was inadequate and misleading, and that the men who came to the front in the Revolution were for the most part small men. But there is an intrinsic movement

in affairs independent of human agency ; those who direct, or seem to direct, the course of nations are themselves borne along by the living tide. And neither in intensity nor in duration is the evil even of a bad time as great as our imagination paints it. 'Sanabiles fecit Deus nationes super terras.'¹ There is a natural sanity, a natural good sense and moderation in men which acts as an antidote to the most pernicious principles. Our practice is better than our theory ; a happily defective logic secures us from many a folly and many a crime. Extremists, whether of the Right or the Left, are few in number. The average man is of the Centre ; and history in the long run is made by the average man.

The nations that accepted the Reformation had their Revolution, or a measure of it, two centuries and more before the rest. This was not an unmixed advantage. The excrescences of the mediæval system indeed were cut away : the absolute monarchies which the removal of the Papal theocracy called into existence were at least national ; with all their shortcomings the Thirty-nine Articles and the Westminster Confession were less cramping to the spirit than the decrees of Trent. But the framework of Protestantism remained that of the Middle Ages ; the outlook over life of Augsburg and Geneva was, if with a difference full of promise for the future, for the time being and in substance, that of Rome. The full fruit of the Reformation was not gathered till the Reformation had become a thing of the past.

Der Protestantismus ist zunächst in seinen wesentlichen Grundzügen und Ausprägungen eine Umformung der mittelalterlichen Idee, und das 'Unmittelalterliche, Moderne, das in ihm unleugbar enthalten ist, kommt als Modernes erst in Betracht, nachdem diese erste und klassische Form des Protestantismus zerbrochen und zerfallen war.'²

The Europe of the sixteenth century was not ripe for either civil or religious freedom ; and when the hour of liberation struck, the half-emancipated nations, feeling their bondage

¹ Wisdom i. 14.

² E. Troeltsch, *Die christliche Religion*, p. 257.

less galling, were less eager than the others to break their chains. This is why the Revolution, the second act in the great drama of which the Reformation was the first, is seen to greater advantage in Catholic than in Protestant countries, above all in France, which is at once the foremost Catholic nation and of all nations the most open to ideas. Catholic as she remained, by reason at once of the genius of her people and the policy of her rulers, France had been profoundly affected by the Reformation. The idea of authority as such was shaken. The old authorities, indeed, both in Church and State, retained their place; but the belief in their inevitableness was sapped. Slowly but surely the conviction gained ground that they held their tenure not of inherent and intrinsic right, but in virtue of service rendered; because they worked, on the whole, for the common good. Formulated by the few, but passing subtly, after the manner of ideas, into the atmosphere breathed by the many, this changed conception of authority became the condition on which the Monarchy and the Church existed. When it disappeared, when it became plain that these institutions were obstacles to its welfare and progress, the nation broke away from them, first from the Monarchy, then in our own time from the Church.

It is easy to criticise the Revolution, its men, its methods, its aims. Such criticism is, for the most part, futile. The first rule of criticism is, Put yourself in his place: reproduce in imagination the standpoint, the circumstances, and the limitations of those whose conduct you judge. If this be borne in mind it will be seen, first, that the break-up of the existing order was inevitable; secondly, that the worst features by which the catastrophe, when it came, was attended, stood to the old society as effect to cause.

It is a mistake to suppose that the destructive criticism of the French philosophers a hundred years ago was the great operative cause of the Revolution. If Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau had never lived, or if their works had all been suppressed as soon as they were printed, their absence would have given no new life to agriculture, would not have stimulated trade, nor replenished the bankrupt fisc, nor

incorporated the privileged classes with the bulk of the nation, nor done anything else to repair an organisation of which every single part had become incompetent for its proper function. It was the material misery and the political despair engendered by the reigning system which brought willing listeners to the feet of the teachers who framed beneficent governments on the simple principles of reason and the natural law. And these teachers only busied themselves with abstract politics because the real situation was desperate. They had no alternative but to evolve social improvements out of their own consciousness. There was not a single sound organ in the body politic which they could have made the starting-point of a reconstitution of society on the base of its actual or historic structure. The mischiefs which resulted from their method are patent and undeniable. But the method was made inevitable by the curse of the old regime.¹

The law of cause and effect is invariable. You cannot at once destroy and create character: were a people after centuries of misgovernment to retain the virtues of free citizens—their self-restraint, their power of initiative, their political insight—half the arguments against misgovernment would be gone.

It is difficult for us in these happier days to picture to ourselves the France of Louis XV. Decomposition is the word that best expresses it: the life and meaning of what had once been vigorous and significant was gone. The stupidity of the Government was, if possible, greater than its oppressiveness; had it been designed to depress industry, to waste and exhaust the natural resources of the soil, and to impoverish the population, it could not have attained those ends more effectually. The Court resembled nothing so much as that of the Lower Empire. The nobles had sunk to the level of gentlemen ushers: justice had fled from the tribunals, religion from the Church. The Parliaments, long the refuge of such independence as survived, had fallen into deserved odium; of what they were capable, the conduct of that of Toulouse in the cases of the Calas family and of

¹ Morley, *Compromise*, p. 259.

Sirven is evidence. Scarcely less infamous was the condemnation of Lally-Tollendal by the Parliament of Paris, the Parliament which confirmed the sentence passed at Abbeville on D'Etallonde and La Barre. La Bruyère's description of the peasantry is too well known to quote ; if, as we are told, things were worse with the masses of the population in other countries, the connexion of cause and effect in the great events which followed is the more palpable ; no society can violate the law of its existence and live. When Turgot entered upon his office as intendant in the Limousin this is what he found. The leading industries of the province, stock-breeding and the cattle trade, had been destroyed by overtaxation ; the manufacture of paper, which had found a market not only in France but all over Europe, was perishing from the same cause.

An excise duty at the mill, a duty on exportation at the provincial frontier, a duty on the importation of rags—all these vexations had succeeded in reducing the trade with Holland to one-fourth of its previous dimensions. Nor were paper and cattle the only branches of trade that had been blighted by fiscal perversity. The same burden arrested the transport of saffron across the borders of the province : salt, which came up the Charente from the marshes by the coast, was stripped of all its profit, first by the duty paid on crossing from the Limousin to Périgord and Auvergne, and next by the right possessed by certain of the great lords on the banks of the Charente to help themselves at one point or another to portions of the cargo. Iron was subject to a harassing excise in all those parts of the country that were beyond the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Bordeaux.¹

The *corvée*, or system of forced labour, by which the roads were maintained, was at once wasteful and slovenly ; the cost of keeping up the execrable tracks which here and there crossed the district was three times as great as that at which excellent means of communication could have been provided under a rational and businesslike administration. The *taille*, or person and property tax, combined the minimum

¹ Morley, *Critical Miscellanies*, ii. 115.

of profit to the Treasury with the maximum of inconvenience to those on whom it was levied ; and these were precisely the classes least able to meet the burden, the privileged orders, those, that is to say, composed of the wealthier members of the community, being exempt. The decay of the old feudal society had brought about anarchy, legislative, administrative, and economic. Absolutism itself was a lesser evil. The central Government, remote from local influences, was not unwilling to redress individual grievances when those came under its notice ; but it was powerless, in the teeth of the vested interests combined against reform, to attack the root of the mischief ; society could endure neither its diseases nor their cure. For extreme evils extreme remedies. Only in the agony of the exile could Israel be reconstructed ; only from the fires of the Revolution could the new France rise.

It is strange that the signs of the times should have been misread by a political philosopher, the greatest, perhaps, that the world has seen since Aristotle, who even in the dawn of the Revolution blamed where others applauded, and upon its later stages exhausted the vocabulary of hatred and denunciation. Make what allowance we will for perspective, for temperament, and for that overbalance which is so often the tribute paid by genius to lesser capacity, it cannot but be matter for regret that on the most momentous issue set before his generation Burke should have taken lower ground, we will not say than thinkers like Bentham or James Mill, or than poets like Wordsworth, but than politicians such as Fox, Windham, or Pitt. With all the profundity of his genius and with all the splendour of his declamation he tilted, like the knight of La Mancha, against windmills. His standpoint was beyond question, but it had no relation to the circumstances ; his conclusions were exact, but the premisses from which they were drawn were as remote from reality as the visions of Rousseau. The French, he insisted—and it was the foundation of his whole argument—possessed ‘the elements of a constitution very nearly as good as could be wished.’ It was an amazing delusion, vitiating his position *in limine* ; the very reverse, as lesser

men than he saw plainly enough was the case. 'The French could not have done as we did in 1688,' was the rejoinder of Francis. 'They had no constitution, as we had, to recur to. They had no foundation to build upon. They had no walls to repair.' With us the change from the old to the new came by degrees, to them in an instant; our eyes, little by little, grew habituated to the day as it advanced; theirs were blinded by the sudden glare of the full light of noon. The political instinct, if in the intellectual sphere it deserves the hard things which Mr. Morley says of it—and even here we should be sorry to endorse them—is in the sphere of action the secret of a people's normal and harmonious growth. 'Suave mari magno.' Elizabeth, Cromwell, the men of 1688, politicians all rather than thinkers—these made English to differ from French history, and forbade 'the red fool fury of the Seine' to disturb the placid waters of the Thames and the Forth. It is the fashion—a not very happy fashion—to belittle our stalwarts. A little of Macaulay's robust Whiggery would invigorate an anæmic age. There is a mean between self-complacency and self-depreciation. We need not be ashamed if our hearts beat higher at the remembrance of those who made England the England that we know.

The old France, then, perished not so much under external assault as of internal rottenness; the Revolution did but accelerate a catastrophe which in the nature of things could not have been long delayed. 'It was not the Revolution,' says Hazlitt, 'that produced the change in the face of society, but the change in the texture of society that produced the Revolution, and brought its outward appearance into a nearer conformity with its inward sentiments.' Bankruptcy was imminent. When Louis XV remarked that the corporation of farmers-general was a support of the State a courtier answered, 'Yes, sire; they support it as a rope supports a corpse hanging from a gallows.' The only modern parallels are to be found in Egypt before the British occupation, or in Turkey, and perhaps in Russia to-day. The destructive side of the Revolution, then, may be taken for granted; it is the constructive which calls for criticism; the ideas which

it embodied, the principles from which it set out. The sovereignty of the people, the rights of man, liberty, equality, fraternity, the progress and perfectibility of the species—these were the main articles of the new creed. Powerful as solvents of the old, they were powerless to bring about the new synthesis. They were not themselves new ; they meet us in an undeveloped but perfectly recognisable form in scholastic philosophy and theology ; ‘ there is not a single principle in the social contract which may not be found in Hobbes or Locke or Althusen.’ What was new was the way in which they were applied, the rigorous deductions drawn from them, the removal of the resisting medium which the compact structure of mediæval society had provided. Thus taken they were at once profoundly false and profoundly mischievous. ‘ I do not enter into those metaphysical distinctions,’ said Burke in another context. ‘ I hate the very sound of them. This is the true touchstone of all theories which regard man and the affairs of man : does it suit his nature in general ? does it suit his nature as modified by his habits ? ’

Sound sense and sound philosophy. Yet this is far from being an exhaustive account of the matter. As there are truths which obscure so there are errors which elicit truth. Not to see the wood for the trees is a common enough form of defective vision : the passage *per errorem ad veritatem* is no new thing in the history of mind. This is why there are few great teachers who have not used paradox as a means of conveying instruction. Men are lethargic and need to be shaken out of their mental and moral torpor : paradox rouses, startles, perplexes—last of all attracts. For the moment it is unreasonable either to look for balance of judgment or to complain of its absence ; as well complain because the circle is not square. The burden of the past is so heavy that the generation which after long and painful effort has succeeded in emancipating itself is not in a position to do justice to the best side of the system under which it suffered ; the wound is raw. Voltaire was blind to the deeper things of Catholicism. So, too, Moses was no unbiased judge of Egyptian

civilisation, St. Paul of Judaism, Luther of the mediæval Church. The swing of the pendulum follows. The true idea underlying the paradox is retained, the exaggeration of its expression forgotten: thus the world of thought and action advances. It was so here. The Social Contract was a fiction: it is not in virtue of contract that society comes into being or subsists. Men are not born free, equal, or brothers; the sovereignty of the people and the rights of man are not primitive facts but products of late reflection; progress is an elaborate and, some—we are not of their number—would have it, an uncertain calculation; the perfectibility of the species, the ever-receding shore of a limitless sea. But these beliefs set before men's eyes the ends for which society exists with a vividness of which the grey theories of philosophy were incapable; they came to send fire upon the earth. Are we not the better for its kindling? There are illusions, if indeed they are illusions, and not rather forecasts, under which it is good to labour and from which it is dangerous to be freed. If we believe that there is no evil without a remedy we shall at least not acquiesce in preventable evils; if we are convinced that the course of the world makes for good, that reason is to be trusted, that the goal of the human race is attainable and is in fact in process of being attained, we can take the open road and advance fearlessly; the night, with the shapes of darkness that haunt it—doubt, despondency, pessimism—is gone. The realisation of the idea is another matter: here the nature of the medium, its power of resistance, the distinction between pure and applied science, must be borne in mind. It was because the Revolution lost sight of such considerations as these that Burke execrated it. But there are inspired follies; and 'it is better to be a fool than to be dead.' It is not for us, who have entered into its fruits, to repudiate the generous paradox of the Age of Reason; called, like the prophet, to curse it, the word of blessing rises even to reluctant lips. We look back to it, indeed, with the regretful longing with which the grown man looks back to the dreams of his vanished youth. Unrealised, perhaps in their first form incapable of realisation,

they stand on a loftier plane than the lowered aspirations and dusty levels of later years. They are the symbol of an extinguishable hope and of a faith that has moved and will again move mountains.

Our provisional acquiescence in the straitness and blank absence of outlook or hope of the millions who come on to the earth that greets them with no smile, and then stagger blindly under dull burdens for a season, and at last are shovelled silently back under the ground—our acquiescence can only be justified in the sight of humanity by the conviction that this is one of the temporary conditions of a vast process working forwards through the impulse and agency of the finer human spirits, but needing much blood, many tears, uncounted myriads of lives, and immeasurable geologic periods of time for its high and beneficent consummation. . . . As against the ignoble host who think that the present ordering of men, with all its prodigious inequalities, is in foundation and substance the perfection of social blessedness, Rousseau was almost in the right. It is only the faith that we are moving slowly away from the existing order, as our ancestors moved slowly away from the old want of order, that makes the present endurable and makes any tenacious effort to raise the future possible.¹

If the eighteenth century was the Age of Reason the nineteenth was that of at least apparent reaction. The cant, political and religious, of this reaction is as worthless as most other cants. Jacobinism has no monopoly of either folly or savagery; religion in every age has suffered less from its enemies than from its friends.

‘The massacres of September and the Revolutionary tribunal wrought less bloodshed in twenty-three months than the French Catholics had done in about as many days,’ says Lord Acton, speaking of the St. Bartholomew massacre. ‘The clergy applauded. . . . After the energetic approval given by the Court of Rome it was not quite easy for a priest to express dissent.’²

When all has been said the Revolution marks an immense step in human progress: and it is not very profitable to ask

¹ Morley, *Rousseau*, i. 179.

² *Lectures on Modern History*, p. 163.

whether this advance might have been made as effectually and with fewer drawbacks had its men and measures been other than they were. The 'might-have-beens' of history are for the most part waste land, outside the margin of cultivation. Moderate men supply light, not driving power. For this we must go to enthusiasts; the fire of enthusiasm produces motion as well as light. Burke would in all probability have been as ineffectual a reformer in the State as Erasmus in the Church. Both saw too clearly the magnitude of the task and the difficulties that beset it; the Luthers, the Garibaldis, the men of the Mountain have their place in the scheme of things. Nor need we regret that the end of the old world should have come sooner rather than later; the evils which attend the lingering decay of a corrupt society are more grievous than those brought about by its fall. *Fieri non debuit, factum valet*, must be our verdict on much of the content of history; what is done is done. But it was impossible to maintain the high pressure at which the preceding age had been living. Everywhere there was a distrust of ideas, an impatience of discussion, an unwillingness to enter upon political or social change. The old dynasties were re-established, partly by force, partly by the assent of indifference; the Revolution was an interlude; 'absolument tuer l'esprit du dix-huitième siècle' was the avowed aim. Had this spirit been really assimilated by Europe, or even by France, such an aim would have lain outside the range of practical politics. What made it seem—it never did more than seem—possible was that theory had outstripped fact, the idea lost sight of the concrete humanity in which, if at all, it had to take shape. Hence its failure either to realise itself or to leaven average opinion. The average man had never made the principles of '89 his own. He had been carried away by the current, and when it subsided he returned to his normal standpoint. This standpoint, however—and here was the essential feature of the situation to which the Legitimist and Ultramontane faction was blind—was not that of the preceding generation; this, with its ideas, its methods, its standards, had gone beyond recall. It was because

the restored rulers could not or would not face this fact that they came to such speedy shipwreck : from the first the reconstruction was artificial ; to those who looked below the surface it was clear that it had not come to stay. The fire that leaped to flame in 1848 was never wholly extinguished ; under the superimposed absolutism, of which Metternich was the personification, the imprisoned giant stirred. Vain was the effort to restrain him ; the fetters that can bind spirit have yet to be forged. What is called reaction is, if we look at it closely, no more than the passing back-eddy of an advancing tide. Society is a process, a becoming ; the forces that guide its development know neither cessation nor sleep. Their activity is now more, now less perceptible ; a period of exceptional energy is followed by one of comparative repose. But this repose is comparative only. The movement escapes our observation, but it is continuous ; that which we observe moves on, and we who observe are borne along in the movement. It was so in the Europe of the Restoration. Below the surface-water of official conservatism the undercurrent set towards the open sea.

The reformers of the nineteenth century worked on other lines than those of the eighteenth ; their aims were more concrete, their purpose was narrowed down to more definite issues. The grosser abuses of the old regime had disappeared ; in the Continental States the administration was in the hands of a bureaucracy of the Josephite or Napoleonic type, which, if repressive and centralised, was for the most part painstaking and upright. Industry was encouraged ; a sounder finance had been inaugurated ; where no political issue was involved the law courts were to be trusted ; the Governments, except in Central and Southern Italy, though neither representative nor constitutional, were well-meaning and, according to their lights, just. What was overlooked was that material well-being, important as it is as a condition of welfare, is a means to an end. The life that expresses and is the outcome of national intelligence and will was wanting ; this stood aloof, or was diverted into other channels. The more active spirits

devoted themselves to the propagation and realisation of ideas in advance of and often in acute conflict with the established order ; the vision of national and economical independence took shape and form. The first transformed Italy and Germany from geographical expressions into nations, and so remade the map of Europe ; the second created that socialism which, however impracticable as a system, as a tendency is revolutionising the mind and sentiment of our time. Each of these movements made for human unity. The first, if an apparent, is but an apparent exception ; the recognition of the unity of the nation is a step towards the recognition of the unity of mankind. A vague cosmopolitanism is to be distrusted ; a beginning must be made with what is nearest to us ; the narrower precedes the higher generalisation. Free Trade, improved means of communication, the internationalism of science, art, and literature all point in the same direction. The goal was that of the thinkers of the eighteenth century, but it was pursued with fuller knowledge ; the intermediate steps were not slurred but taken each in its order, with the result that the advance made is permanent, there can be no going back on the positions gained.

The unitive tendency of the social movement is even more obvious than that of the nationalist. It is ungracious and may seem presumptuous to criticise the moral standards and achievements of Christendom. Knowledge increases from generation to generation ; here the ancients were as children, we are as men. But in the province of conduct surely this is not so. The old world stood nearer to the source. A Paul, a Francis of Assisi, a Xavier—are they not beyond and above our judgment, models for our imitation, not objects of our little praise and blame ? This attitude of reverence befits both the worshipped and the worshipper, ‘*On raconte qu’Angelico de Fiesole ne peignait qu’à genoux les têtes de la Vierge et du Christ. Il serait bien que la critique fît de même et ne bravât les rayons de certaines figures devant lesquelles se sont inclinés les siècles qu’après les avoir adorées.*’ But it is impossible to separate the moral and the intellectual. Ethical science, as science,

is progressive ; here, as elsewhere, the child of to-day possesses knowledge which the sages of antiquity did not possess. Their relative position, of course, is unchanged ; he is a child, they were sages. What is changed is the sum of knowledge. This is an increasing capital ; it grows under our eyes. If we start from the familiar threefold classification of duties—to God, to ourselves, and to our neighbour—how great is the development accomplished and in process of accomplishment ! The realisation rather than the annihilation of self presents itself to us as the object of moral effort ; of how much of the asceticism, the ritual observance, the assent to propositions embodying non-religious subject-matter, by which men, better than we, believed that the Deity could be propitiated, does He assure us, ‘I commanded it not, neither came it into my mind !’¹ Under the third head the advance is still more perceptible. The question, Who is my neighbour ? put in every generation more anxiously, receives in every generation a more comprehensive answer ; the number and extent of our obligations increase upon us ; new duties and new ramifications of old duties come into view. Social ethics, the science which deals with the relation of individuals to classes and groups of men, and with the relation of those classes and groups to one another, is yet in its infancy ; and in the province of individual morality such virtues as justice, humanity, truthfulness seem capable of indefinite extension. To take the age which we have been considering, the most eminent Christians of the old regime, men of the type of Bossuet and Fénelon, were conscious of no injustice or moral wrong of any sort in the system of privilege which was eating out the life of the society in which they flourished ; a little earlier, saintly bishops like Charles Borromeo or Lancelot Andrewes saw nothing shocking in religious persecution ; slavery was defended almost in our own time by good men. Grave magistrates were conscious of no inhumanity in the tortures and barbarous punishments inflicted, till the comparatively recent reform of the criminal code, by the courts over which they presided ; the value set on human

¹ Jeremiah vii. 31.

life and human suffering is a thing of late growth. On such points as these the progress of the world is manifest; a bad man to-day would not do what good men then did without scruple. But how much remains to be done! Truth for its own sake is in small esteem; the controversialist repeats the stalest and most discredited fiction without a blush: economically the weak are the prey of the strong; the speculator gambles on the market and is held blameless; the investor, as long as he receives his dividends, is careless from what source or under what conditions they are derived. Man for man these persons are probably as estimable as their critics; but they represent a low moral stage, a stage from which the best conscience of the time is moving away. That we should distrust our conscience if it tells us that we cannot do what is done by good people about us is a truth open to misconception; the appeal to common sense is too often a thinly disguised appeal to common ignorance and indifference. Progressive moral ideas present themselves at times in grotesque shapes. This, however, is no argument against their validity. Let us fix our eye in each case on the essential. The simple life remains a good, though the forms under which it has been sought are inadequate; human brotherhood remains an ideal, though the Utopias in which reformers from Plato to Lassalle have sought to realise it be banished to the limbo of forgotten dreams.

Each of these two movements of thought, it will be noticed, springs directly from the eighteenth century. There is a close kinship between the Revolution, which emphasised the rights of nations as such, and the doctrine of nationalities; and between the social theories of Rousseau, suffused as they were with the glow of passion, and modern Socialism in the larger as well as in the narrower sense; while, to pass to the province in which it might seem we stand farthest from his methods and temper, what schoolman or Father of the Church has left his mark more powerfully or more permanently on religion than Voltaire? Think of it as we will, the eighteenth century is the rock out of which we are hewn; the points on which our own time differs from it are

fewer and less essential than those on which they are agreed. 'La Révolution française a formé audessus de toutes les nationalités particulières une patrie intellectuelle dont les hommes de toutes les nations ont pu devenir citoyens.'

If this be so, how are we to explain the lowering of the temperature since the close of this great century? On the higher levels of thought, it is said with truth, there is no such thing as reaction; and since in society, as a whole, the forces that make for progress work without cessation, if with unequal velocity, how, except by the swing of the pendulum—itself an effect rather than a cause—must we account for the flat temper, the absence of enthusiasm, which have replaced the fervour of the revolutionary age? It may be answered that we have learned by experience that there are limits to the power of legislation. You cannot transform society by a stroke of the pen; you cannot make men virtuous and intelligent by Act of Parliament. The evils from which the community suffers to-day—and they are sufficiently patent—are to be met not by frontal attack but by a flank movement—by education, by improvement of environment, by raising men's standards and ideas. And this takes time. Much good work is being done, but it is being done imperceptibly; we can no more see its results at this stage of the process than we can hear the grass grow. This is true; but it is not the whole truth: there are other causes which have contributed to bring about a certain lassitude, an indisposition to interfere with the course of events. In the first place the preponderating influence in most modern communities is that of the middle class, a class which by its training and pursuits is averse to extremes and wanting in that fighting instinct which comes to the people by nature and to aristocracies by tradition. It has done much for liberty; its achievements in science, literature, and art have been of the highest order. But those excellencies have been crowded out by sheer numbers: with all its great names an impression of mediocrity and flatness attaches to the periods of its predominance. The July Monarchy is a case in point: nor are parallels

wanting in our own history. Its characteristic defects—its inexperience of affairs, its self-satisfaction, its lack of dignity and breeding attached themselves to the period now called the Early Victorian, to its politics, its literature, its art. With all its real merits they gave the note that distinguished the Manchester School of English Liberalism. To this school we owe the cheap loaf and Free Trade ; it encouraged manufactures and organised industry ; it carried British goods over every sea and into every quarter of the globe. But material issues meant much to it ; ideal little ; it was deficient in culture, inherited or acquired. To the humanitarian legislation which trade competition had made imperative it was indifferent or hostile ; it opposed the Factory and Adulteration Acts ; to buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest market was its first aim. Hence the antipathy with which it inspired idealists of every sort and kind from Carlyle to Newman. They did not, indeed, do justice to its good points, which were many ; but they discerned its shortcomings. To those who saw life *sub specie æternitatis* it seemed a mockery ; they asked for bread and received a stone.

To this radical weakness on the side of feeling was added the sense of an equally radical intellectual inadequacy. To educate the people is a benefit rather to those educated than to education. What is gained in extension is lost in intension : it was a two-edged saying of Newman's that ' a popular religion will always be corrupt.' The diffusion of ideas means their admixture with alloy. The prerogative of the few, they retain, relatively at least, their purity : the property of the many, they are coloured by the prejudice, the passion, the vulgarity of the crowd. To take a prominent instance : the historical method fitting in with certain dominant conceptions in the region of natural science, has brought about a way of looking at society more akin to that of Burke than to that of the eighteenth-century reformers. To Burke, indeed, the modern spirit of investigation would have been distasteful. He ' distrusted those who inquired into the origins of religion and government too curiously ' ; a sacred veil, he thought, should be thrown over these

things. But such inquiry loses much of its danger—and, it may be added, much of its utility—if it be antiquarian only; if, that is to say, its practical bearings be set aside and the interests of progress left to shift for themselves, the playthings of time, circumstance, and the thousand and one accidents that make life what it is. Such an employment of the historical method, needless to say, is a perversion; but it is a perversion to which this method is exposed in the hands of men of more subtlety than force of character. The method in question may be described as ‘the comparison of the forms of an idea, or a usage, or a belief, at any given time with the earlier forms from which they were evolved and the later forms into which they were developed, and the establishment from such a comparison of an ascending and descending order among the facts.’ Hence a tendency rather to classify than to estimate; to regard the objects of an investigation rather as antiquities than as living mental and moral forces.

Character is considered less with reference to its absolute qualities than as an interesting scene strewn with scattered rudiments, survivals, inherited predispositions. Opinions are counted rather as phenomena to be explained than as matters of truth or falsehood. Of usages we are beginning first of all to think where they come from, and secondarily whether they are the most fitting and convenient that men could be got to accept. In the last century men asked of a belief or a story, Is it true? We now ask, How did men come to take it for true?

Facilis descensus; the standpoint is one on which it is easy to slip. In a world in which law rules, why take trouble? In a society in which good and evil are so inextricably mingled, why take a side? To do so is superfluous and may easily be harmful. Let things take their course: everything is much the same, and nothing much matters; it will be all the same a hundred years hence. Those who postulate the unity of life, and the coincidence of intellectual and moral virtue, will not be duped by the sophism. But it is one thing to detect it in words, another to escape its influence;

to be able, while seeing round and behind the question at issue, to act with decision and vigour when the time for action comes. To retain at once insight and energy, the consciousness of the complexity of life and the readiness to grapple with its problems—this is the difficulty, and will, we doubt not, be the achievement of our age. Neither side of the equation can be dropped. We cannot go back to what would now be an affected and unreal ignorance ; we cannot rest satisfied to be spectators only of a conflict in which the future of mankind is at stake. And it is in action that the solution is to be found.

It would be odd if the theory which makes progress dependent on modification forbade us to attempt to modify. When it is said that the various successive changes in thought and institutions present and consummate themselves spontaneously no one means by spontaneity that they come to pass independently of human effort and volition. Progress is not automatic, in the sense that if we were all cast into a deep slumber for the space of a generation we should awake and find ourselves in a greatly improved social state. The world only grows better, even in the moderate degree in which it does grow better, because people wish that it should, and take the right steps to make it better. Evolution is not a force, but a process ; not a cause, but a law. It explains the source, and marks the immovable limitations, of social energy. But social energy itself can never be superseded either by evolution or by anything else.¹

At the root of the questions, varying in every generation, which society is called upon to solve, lies the more general problem of the relation of man to his surroundings. What is his chief end ? What has he to hope, to expect, to fear ? Hence the impossibility of getting rid of what is called, with unconscious cynicism, the religious difficulty. Religion is the ground-problem ; it meets us, turn which way we will. The Revolution is a case in point. This great event, though not directly religious in character, would have been impossible had not a transformation of religion preceded it ; a survey of the eighteenth century would be incomplete

¹ Morley, *Compromise*, pp. 28 ff., 210.

without an account of this transformation and of its bearing on the religious conceptions of to-day. The often quoted saying of Voltaire, 'Ecrasez l'infâme,' has drawn down unmeasured denunciation on its author. 'To admire Voltaire is a sign of a corrupt soul,' said De Maistre: 'if any one is drawn to his writings it is a sign that God does not love such an one.' The perspective of to-day is more accurate; before we echo these pious transports let us consider what this Infamous was. Voltaire, whose name may stand as representing the philosophy of which he was the foremost exponent, was animated not by antipathy to a creed, but by hatred of a Church. That this Church professed to be Christian was beside the question; it was not its Christianity that he attacked. It was its working as an institution, not its teaching that he detested; this only came in for criticism in so far as it was identified with the institution and with the intolerable evils which the institution produced. The religion against which he set his face was not the Christianity of the New Testament; this had disappeared centuries back: nor was it a theology, Catholic or Protestant; with this he did not concern himself: nor was it the allegorising of historical creeds into psychological symbolism, so common in our own time; this had not yet appeared on the scene. After this fashion, indeed, the Neoplatonists had dealt with the more embarrassing myths of Olympus; but the method, though fitfully and insecurely essayed by the scholars of the Renaissance, was foreign to the positive temper of the Voltairian period, and recommended itself to neither the advocates nor the opponents of the Church. Again, whatever his estimate of their opinions, there is no instance of his having reviled or ridiculed good men. He admired the English Quakers; nor, vehement as they were, were his animosities personal. When the Jesuits were suppressed he took a member of the Order into his household; his quarrel was with a system, not with men. And that the system which he assailed, the living working system of official Catholicism as it existed in France under Louis XV, deserved the epithet infamous cannot seriously be denied.

The change of the religion taught by Christ into ecclesiastical Christianity is perhaps the most momentous event in history. The Catholic sees in it a development, the Protestant a corruption; to the historian it presents itself in another light, as the result of causes whose operation was as inevitable as it was unperceived. 'Auf den Enthusiasmus lässt sich kein Gemeinwesen aufbauen,' says a living theologian. Here is the process in a nutshell. Christianity could have retained its ideal character only by the sacrifice of its world-mission. The choice was unconscious, as such choices are for the most part; but it had to choose between the two. Only one choice, it may appear, was open; yet, had those who were called upon to make it realised what it involved they might have hesitated. For the price asked was prohibitive; and it has been, and is being, paid to the last farthing. The Church overcame the world with the world's weapons; with greater force, greater cunning, greater unscrupulousness. The preacher points with pride to the leavening of the world by religion; he overlooks the reverse side of the picture, the leavening of religion by the world. It was as if the Tempter had approached the Church with the offer made to and rejected by her Founder, the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them for one act of homage; and with the acceptance the poison had entered into her soul. Age by age it penetrated deeper; she became one with the actual order of things, sharing its weaknesses, compromised by its shortcomings, succeeding to its mixed inheritance. Manifold as were the causes and results of the Reformation, it was first and foremost a protest against this secularisation of the religious idea. To secularise, experience showed, was to degrade it and to incapacitate it for its function; with all the side issues of the movement the essential question was, Was religion to keep pace with or to fall behind the mind and conscience of the time? Roughly speaking the Reformed nations chose the first, the unreformed the second alternative; and the subsequent history of each group has been decided by the choice made. Religiously each lost something that could ill be spared; Protestantism the masses, for whom it was too abstract;

Catholicism the educated, with whom it fell more and more out of touch. But politically the former had the advantage.

The Protestant nations have advanced towards a higher civilisation with orderly if measured steps, and as communities; the Catholic have broken up into factions; oscillated between the extremes of rival fanaticisms, developed at the expense of unity under the stimulus of civil and religious strife.

In Voltaire's time the relations between religion and official Catholicism had reached breaking-point: for generations the two had been diverging farther and farther in temper, methods, and aim. There were good men, needless to say, in the French Church; but the Church had ceased to be, in any active sense, a force that made for righteousness. It had become a department of state; the most powerful of the corporations that barred the way to reform in every direction, and the most odious, because it made use of religion as a pretext for wrongdoing. Its effeteness must not blind us to its ferocity. It was the golden age of the French *salon*: never had society been more many-sided, more untrammelled, more intelligent. But this was only one side of the life of the period: it was an age of contrasts; the extremes of scepticism and superstition, of humanitarianism and mediæval savagery stood side by side. Hence the vehemence of the philosophical attack: there could be neither truce nor quarter; men were fighting for their lives:

Here Calas broken on the wheel, there Sirven condemned to be hanged, farther off a gag thrust into the mouth of a lieutenant-general, a fortnight after that five youths condemned to the flames for extravagances that deserved nothing worse than St. Lazare. Is this the country of philosophy and pleasure? It is the country rather of the St. Bartholomew massacre. Why, the Inquisition would not have ventured to do what these Jansenist judges have done. . . . Ah, my friend, is it a time for laughing? Did men laugh when they saw Phalaris's bull being made red hot?

Thus, sick with horror and shame, wrote Voltaire to D'Alembert. Which were the enemies of religion, of Christianity,

those who denounced or those who perpetrated these crimes ? It was no time to discriminate or draw nice distinctions. If good men shelter under the same roof with bad, when it falls both are involved in a common destruction ; those who associate falsehood with truth have themselves to blame if, when the falsehood is detected, truth shares in its discredit. We may regret it, but certain antecedents are followed by certain consequents ; things are what they are. Recrimination will not help us. The criticism of the eighteenth century was external, hard, superficial ; so was the system which it criticised ; it was blind to the higher side of Catholicism ; so was the Catholicism with which it had to deal. Do not let us take names for things. To oppose a clergy or a Church is not necessarily to oppose religion ; impiety and wrong become not less but more detestable when they shelter themselves under the Christian name. 'It was just because the cruelty, persecution, and darkness in the last ten years of the reign of Louis XV were things possible that the onslaught upon Catholicism was justifiable and praiseworthy.'¹ The overthrow of the Infamous was the first condition of religious revival and reform.

Piety is seldom found on the side of reformers. The devout in Israel, we may be sure, regarded the denunciation of the high places by the prophets of the eighth century B.C., much as those of a later generation regarded the crusade against the Infamous waged by Voltaire and the Encyclopædists. Nor were they without what casuists call a 'probable' opinion in their favour. In each movement many a time-honoured shrine was shattered, many a poetic legend and gracious symbol disappeared. But piety, though a virtue, is not the only virtue ; nor is it to be purchased at the price of the qualities by which men and nations live. There is probably no great movement in history, if we except those directly religious in character—and these are attended by other and graver dangers—which has not acted unfavourably on piety : the more energy expended in one channel the less remains available for others, the total being represented by a fixed sum. This loss, however, is made up

¹ Morley, *Voltaire*, p. 238.

by gain in other directions, while the type of piety injured is one whose extinction has become, in any case, a matter of time. The conditions which brought it into existence are changing, and with their disappearance it disappears. A hardier variety will replace it ; even now the young shoots are bursting through the kindly earth. And that this new growth has become possible is due to the apparently destructive work of plough and harrow, to the breaking up of the exhausted surface-soil. Where would Europe have stood to-day had the last word rested with the Churches, had the Pope, or the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury, or the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland had their way ? Nay, what would have been the fate of the Churches themselves ? It is thanks to heretics that orthodoxy has been kept from putrefaction : the ‘*Acta Sanctorum*’ should include the achievements of men like Diderot, Rousseau, and Voltaire. They supplied Catholicism with the ideas which saved it from becoming a curse to civilisation.

It was no Christian prelate but Diderot who burst the bonds of a paralysing dogma by the magnificent cry, ‘*Détruisez ces enceintes qui rétrécissent vos idées ! Elargissez Dieu !*’ We see the same phenomenon in our own day. The Christian Churches are assimilating, as rapidly as their formulæ will permit, the new light and the more generous moral ideas and the higher spirituality of teachers who have abandoned all Churches, and who are systematically denounced as enemies of the souls of men. ‘*Sic vos non vobis mellificatis apes !*’ These transformations of religion by leavening elements contributed by a foreign doctrine are the most interesting process in the history of truth.¹

More than one order of ideas presents itself to us in the reconstructed Catholicism of the nineteenth century. Life had been breathed into the dry bones, and with life appeared the play of conflicting forces. The survivors of the past generation retained the traditional Gallican standpoint—a national Church, supporting and supported by the historic monarchy, and constituting an essential part of the fabric

¹ Morley, *Diderot*, i. 130.

of society. The newer school, of which De Maistre and Lamennais, far apart as they stood in many respects, were representative, saw—as the English Tractarians and the Fathers of the Scottish Disruption saw—that religion, the Church, must be something more than this. A universal idea could accommodate itself to no local or temporary setting; the earthly Jerusalem, like the heavenly, was free. More than any one man De Maistre has left his mark upon Catholicism. The idealisation of the Papacy, its identification with Christianity, the definite establishment of its claim to supremacy and infallibility, are his work. His political instinct, his sense of the concrete, his acuteness in detecting the weak points in his opponents' position, recommended him to no less important a thinker than Comte and to no less eminent a statesman than Guizot. The career of each of these distinguished persons may remind us that a temper too exclusively practical is apt to overreach itself. The elaborate constructions of De Maistre were as remote from reality as those of the speculators whom he was never weary of denouncing; he argued to what, he thought, must be, not to what was. The category of the relative had no existence for him; there was no haze on his mental or moral horizon; he was one of those who never think, they always know. His object was practical—to reconstruct European society. The Papacy, the international centre of Christendom, was an instrument ready to his hand. It must be equipped with the necessary attributes; certain prerogatives—prescription, supremacy, infallibility—must be possessed by it, if it was to serve its purpose. Therefore, he argued, it possessed them: what should be was the key to what is. On this foundation of presumed necessity the fabric of modern Ultramontanism was built. It was Jacobinism applied to theology. The Gallicans, the Girondins of the piece, were suppressed by methods as unscrupulous as those of the Committee of Public Safety. 'La tradizione son' io,' said Pius IX: Rome was the Church and the Church was Rome.

The character of the movement is unmistakable: a political motive—the epithet is used in no invidious sense—

rather than a religious was at work. 'Le plus catholique des esprits, le moins chrétien des cœurs' is Sainte-Beuve's judgment on De Maistre.

He speaks of Christianity [says Mr. Morley] as a statesman or publicist would speak of it: not theologically, nor spiritually, but politically and socially. The question with which he concerns himself is the utilisation of Christianity as a force to shape and organise a system of civilised societies, a study of the conditions under which this utilisation had taken place in the earlier centuries of the era, and a deduction from them of the conditions under which we might ensure a repetition of the process in changed modern circumstances.¹

This political conception of the Church is peculiarly Latin; and the circumstances of the time were such as to give it special force. The Church presented herself to Europe as the Saviour of Society, much as Louis Napoleon did to France in 1851; and Europe, exhausted by the expenditure of blood and treasure that the revolutionary and Napoleonic wars had entailed, was ready, provisionally at least, to accept the claim. In neither case did the result justify the experiment; the house was built upon the sand. Societies, like individuals, must work out their own salvation; they cannot, passively, be saved. The Second Empire did but postpone the evil day, which came in 1870 with double destruction: Ultramontanism has brought about a state of things in the Latin Churches resembling in many respects that produced in France by the Second Empire: a surface unity concealing profound interior disunion, a show of submission covering widespread and thinly disguised disaffection. If to be Catholic is to be with the Pope there is no such thing as a Catholic nation; nor, tried by this standard, is the allegiance even of individuals a thing to count upon. The claims of Rome are so enormous that, like our own Royal Prerogative, they remain unchallenged only as long as they are kept in the background: to assert them is to invite revolt. Had Pius IX seen this, the long

¹ Morley, *Critical Miscellanies*, ii. 314.

issue between the Vatican and the Quirinal, still unsolved, if for the moment in temporary and uncertain abeyance, would have been avoided: had Pius X realised it, the Concordat of 1801 would be law in France to-day. That the Papacy retains what hold it does on the world is due to the fact that, with few exceptions, Catholics have agreed not to take its claims too seriously. In normal times a makeshift policy like this works well enough. But, as long as the antagonism between the two ideas of civilisation, the lay and the clerical, remains, the mine is laid, and a spark may explode it. At any moment a conflict may be provoked in which the one thing certain is that the interests of religion will suffer from their belittling and compromising association with a system that has been tried and found wanting, and to which the world will not return.

One consideration remains. The genius of the Roman Church is not dogmatic. She regards dogma rather as a law to be obeyed than as an article of faith to be accepted: 'the Italian is of an essentially untheological cast of mind.' An Italian dignitary was told of the reluctance of an eminent French writer to endorse the condemnation of certain of his works by the Inquisition. He literally could not understand the difficulty. 'Why does he not say what they want?' he asked impatiently: 'no one asks him to believe it.' A Catholic, he argued, accepts the Catholic platform. What this is, is none of his business: the whole thing is a matter of party discipline, with which the individual conscience has nothing to do. Much in the same vein De Maistre, in his famous treatise.

You attach too much importance to the dogmatic side of this religion. By what strange contradiction would you desire to agitate the universe for some academic quibble? . . . If the only point is the establishment of one opinion in the place of another, then [he is arguing against the Conciliar theory of infallibility] the travelling expenses of even one single infallible are sheer waste. If you want to spare the two most valuable things in the world, time and money, make all haste to write to Rome, in order to procure

thence a lawful decision which shall declare the unlawful doubt. Nothing more is needed ; policy asks no more.¹

But a Church cannot live on policy any more than a nation on a paper currency. What does the paper stand for ? The question which De Maistre brushes away is fundamental—Is it true ?

If the substance of religion has nothing to fear from this question, it is otherwise with much that comes to us in its name and under its authority—the relative, historical, human, call it what we will. This is being subjected to an analysis whose end is not yet in sight, but whose results in their broad outlines are no longer doubtful. In the Evangelical Churches the controversies to which this analysis necessarily gave rise are, if not solved, on the way to solution. The appeal is to Scripture and conscience ; and, as the former is better understood and the latter better informed, the friction between the new and the old decreases ; a common standpoint comes into view. In Catholicism the situation is more complicated. The appeal to Scripture is supplemented by that to tradition, that to conscience by that to authority : in each case the letter encroaches on the spirit, that which kills on that which gives life. The result, apparently at least, is to stereotype an outlook over life which has ceased to be possible : hence to serious and thoughtful persons an increasing and intolerable strain. The Catholic Church is an institution on so large a scale that it is difficult to imagine its falling permanently out of touch with the actual ; it is safe to prophesy that a *modus vivendi* will be found with ascertained knowledge and accomplished facts. Whether such a *modus vivendi*, inspired by considerations of policy rather than by motives of a higher order, will prove a permanent solution is another question. Life is built on compromise ; but there is compromise and compromise : ‘it makes all the difference in the world whether we put truth in the first or in the second place.’ The conformity of indifference is fatal to the ends for which conformity exists ; and the most religious minds are the first to revolt against it : they stifle, and break away at all costs into a purer air.

Yet that the Church, Reformed and Unreformed alike, is faced by no easy problem must be admitted. Its roots lie far in the past. When religion has been identified for centuries with its theological and institutional setting, the bankruptcy of the latter reacts upon the former. The partnership cannot be dissolved at a moment's notice ; and the retreat of the traditional theology all along the line, and the advance of historical and scientific criticism from one position to another, may well suggest misgiving. There is a logic of ideas which carries men in spite of themselves to unforeseen conclusions. And when the historical method has done its work it will be the turn of the categorical proposition : the spirit of the eighteenth century, latent but not extinct, will revive. It will find its ground ready ; here Traditionalist and Rationalist see eye to eye. In a striking passage, Mr. Morley anticipates what, from the standpoint of pure rationalism, will be the end.

We will not attack you, as Voltaire did ; we will not exterminate you ; we shall explain you. History will place your dogma in its class, above or below a hundred competing dogmas, exactly as a naturalist classifies his species. From being a conviction it will sink to a curiosity ; from being the guide to millions of human lives it will dwindle down to a chapter in a book. As history explains your dogma so Science will dry it up . . . the mental climate will gradually deprive your symbols of their nourishment, and men will turn their backs upon your system, not because they have confuted it, but because, like witchcraft or astrology, it has ceased to interest them. The great ship of your Church, once so stout and fair and well laden with good destinies, is become a skeleton ship ; it is a phantom hulk, with warped planks and sere canvas, and you who work it are no more than ghosts of dead men, and at the hour when you seem to have reached the bay down your ship will sink like lead or like stone to the lowest bottom.¹

We do not believe that the atmosphere of Rationalism any more than that of Ultramontaniam is one in which men can breathe. We must make for truth ' with the whole man.' The radical defect of each is over-abstraction, the substitution of dead syllogisms for the flesh and blood by which men live.

¹ Morley, *Critical Miscellanies*, i. 81.

We live by nature, not by theories of living. And nature postulates itself: the faculty presupposes the function, the appetite its object, though this may be, and often is, other than we think it—more distant, vaster, more real. Such a faculty is worship, such an appetite is that of the Divine. Argument is as powerless against it as against love or any other primitive fact of nature: the *non in dialectica* of St. Ambrose is a particular instance of a general law. In vain is the alternative, all or nothing, set before us with the persuasiveness of rhetoric and the necessity of deduction; we cannot, perhaps, answer the reasoning; but, guided by a true instinct, we disregard it and pass on. The fallacy of logic is perhaps the most fallacious of the fallacies. When we leave the surface of life symmetry of form means suppression of content; to the weather-wise a perfectly clear horizon forecasts rain. Not in the rationalising, constructive or destructive, of religion lies its strength, but in its spiritualisation, its emancipation from material interests, from social and political alliances, from the philosophies and theologies of the past. The idealising tendency of the best thought of our time points in this direction—its recognition of the One in the Many; its indifference to the setting, if only the substance be retained. The society of the future, economists tell us, will differ widely from that of the present. The same may be said, and with equal certainty, of religion. The simultaneous movement of thought in all the Churches, and its substantial identity under their various surroundings, are as calculated to excite the attention of the observer as were the signs which announced the break-up of the imposing fabric of European society more than a century ago. And we may apply to the former the words used by Burke of the latter—the wisest perhaps that he ever wrote of the great event in question:—

If a great change is to be made in human affairs the minds of men will be fitted to it; the general opinions and feelings will draw that way. Every fear, every hope will forward it; and then they who persist in opposing this mighty current in human affairs will appear rather to resist the decrees of Providence itself than the mere designs of men.

XIII. MODERNISM

IT is the distinctive glory of the Christian religion, says Rothe, that it is of all things the most capable of change. If, from one point of view, *semper eadem* is its note, from another it is *varium et mutabile semper* : in no two generations is either its content or its connotation the same. If, however, there is one presentation of it to which this does not apply, it is, one might have supposed, that offered by the Church of Rome, bound as she is by precedent, by her special genius, and by the persistent voice of the supreme and infallible Papacy to a dead past. But the history of our own time has shown us that this is not to be taken for granted. Whatever its ultimate destiny and results—and it is difficult to forecast them—Modernism has to be reckoned with in this connexion. It is the most important life- and thought-tendency that has appeared in the Church since the Reformation, of which it is a development, and in relation to which it must be judged.

The name Modernism was given to the present phase of the liberalising movement in the Church of Rome by the *Civiltà Cattolica*, and it may be accepted : Modernism may be described as the shape which religion takes in the mind of the modern as distinct from the mediæval man. In this large sense it is found in all the Churches : no communion has escaped the strain which attends the inevitable friction between the old and the new. In the Church of Rome, however, the stereotyping and accentuation of the ecclesiastical element makes this strain exceptionally severe. And the situation is aggravated by the lateness of its development. A suppressed disease is more virulent than one which takes

its normal course. Our Reformation took place in the sixteenth century ; that of Latin Christendom is taking place in the twentieth : this is why it is so acute. It will be understood from this that the affinities of Modernism are not with the Evangelical, still less with the distinctively Anglican, school among ourselves. It stands for a reaction against the external in religion—hierarchy, institutions, formula—which it conceives as relative. It does not abolish these things ; rather it vindicates their right to existence. But it markedly throws the accent elsewhere. Its natural kinship is with the Liberal movement in the English Churches, Episcopalian and Presbyterian, and we must class its representatives, not with Simeon or Pusey, but with such men as Stanley and Jowett in England, or, in Scotland, Erskine, Caird, and Robertson Smith. This being so, it is remarkable that, while Evangelicals and Anglicans have been almost uniformly sympathetic, the one discordant note in this country has come from one or two prominent Broad Churchmen. There is something peculiarly narrow in the narrowness of a broad man. Can any good thing come out of Nazareth ? is a foolish question. When it was asked of an apostle, the answer was, Come and see.

The Roman Church, from her great scale and her venerable antiquity, presents ' writ large ' the features found dispersed and in miniature in lesser Churches : the crimes of her rulers, the extravagances of her theologians, the hardihood of her thinkers, and—let us be just—the sanctity of her saints, all are in ' the grand style.' A protest against the stereotyping and professionalising of religion has never been wanting from within her fold : to take the last century only, the names of Lamennais, Montalembert, Döllinger, and, in his measure, Newman, record attempts to stem the rising tide of clericalism and keep religion in touch with life. It does not follow that because these attempts failed in their immediate purpose they were fruitless : the Liberalisms of the past, political, historical, theological, each has poured its waters into the flood of the Modernism of to-day. What this adds to them is criticism, scientific method, knowledge. Its operation, therefore, is universal : it is not,

as before, a particular dogma or institution that is in question, but the whole fabric of Catholicism as presented by the Church. The Modernists have been branded, in consequence, as iconoclasts, recklessly and cruelly wrecking the faith of the simple. Nothing could be more unjust and untrue. To suppose that they started the questions now before the mind of the age argues ignorance both of the facts and of the laws by which facts of this kind are governed : it is not in this way that such questions arise. *Οὐδεὶς οἶδεν ἔξ ὅτου φάνη.* They are in the air—impalpable : they enter by barred windows, and pass through closed doors. To deny their existence, to evade their presence, to minimise their significance—hopeless. ‘Have faith in criticism,’ said a great English bishop, ‘and have faith in God.’

Though such names as those of Schell, Kraus, and Ehrhard cannot be overlooked in an estimate of the freer tendencies in Catholicism, Modernism proper is a movement of the Latin mind. It is Latin in its pure, as opposed to our applied, intelligence ; Latin also in its distrust of individualism, and in the stress—I think we must say the excessive stress—laid by it on the corporate element in religion and life. Its home is in the Latin countries—France and Italy ; and at the head of every department of its activity stands a man of Latin race. It is Latin again in its passion for the concrete : though here it chimes in with a general tendency of contemporary thought. The mind of our time is positive rather than metaphysical : it turns instinctively to the actual, testing theory and formula by fact. For the Catholic theologian, however, fact, history, the concrete, is dangerous ground. The formulas with which he has to deal grew up in an age which saw ‘men as trees walking,’ in which neither the course of history, the laws of evidence, nor the methods of science were known. Genius of the highest order for affairs and in practical life went hand in hand with incredible intellectual childishness : the time did not ‘know letters, having never learned.’ And formulas, in whatever subject-matter, are relative to the conditions under which they came into being. To take them as absolute, or fixed quantities, and make them the

basis of an elaborate series of reasonings, is to court disaster : the logical fallacy is the most mischievous of fallacies, because, given an error, however slight, in the premisses, the more rigorous the reasoning the wider is the conclusion of the truth. Babel-like we pile syllogism on syllogism : one touch of reality, and the fabric falls to pieces like a house of cards. The most extravagant claims of the Papacy have been maintained with entire conclusiveness by logicians as acute as any that the world has seen. The flaw was not in the structure, but in the foundations : the temple was colossal, but it was built on sand.

Omnibus hoc vitium est cantoribus.

Let us look to ourselves. There are theologians elsewhere than at Rome.

For men of good-will the first years of the last Pontificate were a time of hope. Leo XIII was not a Liberal, but he was scholarly and a friend to scholars ; his instincts were those of a statesman ; he saw the necessity of rescuing the Church from the general contempt into which it had been brought during his predecessor's long reign.

He was anxious to bring Catholic scholarship up to the level of Protestant. With this end in view, he threw open the Vatican library to students ; he made overtures to the Liberals—creating Newman a cardinal, and entering into negotiations with Döllinger ; he encouraged historical research. An ecclesiastic, and a man rather of letters than of learning, he did not really understand the Liberal standpoint, or see how wide a departure from tradition it involved. When it became evident that things were going farther than he had thought, he was puzzled, and temporised. An opportunist by policy and temperament, he was unwilling to break either with the past or the present ; he was old, and left the decision to his successor—not foreseeing that his successor would be Pius X. Between 1878–90, however, the impulse given to learning produced a brilliant group of French scholars—d'Hulst, Duchesne, Loisy, Hébert, Houtin, Batiffol ; the *Instituts catholiques* were developed ; a new era, it seemed, had set in. In a memorable series

of Encyclicals, the Pope busied himself with those social and economic questions which give life to the dry bones of theological speculation ; there was ' a noise and a shaking ' ; for the moment it seemed not impossible that these should receive breath and live. It was not to be. An institution is limited by the law of its being. Rome, Christian as well as Pagan, is ὁ κατέχων—he that restraineth. Its power, enormous as it is, is passive, not active ; it obstructs movement ; it is the negation of life. An individual Pope is powerless against this dead pressure ; autocracy is a legal fiction, whether at St. Petersburg or Rome. Popes come and go ; behind them stands the vast impersonal force of the Roman Church, which was before Popes were ; the permanent officials who, with the tradition of centuries behind them, direct and manipulate the ecclesiastical machine. This works slowly, inevitably, remorselessly. A Leo XIII retards ; a Pius X accelerates its working. Both very slightly ; in the long duration of the Papacy a pontificate is an incident ; it is ' past as a watch in the night.' To fall upon this stone is to be broken ; the record of the distinguished men who have dreamed the fair dream of a renovated Catholicism is one of hope deferred, of illusion shattered, of hearts broken—often of faith failed. From the first the Liberal school was suspect ; the Pharisees, the Sadducees, Herod—the three opposed. One of its most distinguished pioneers was a man whose services to Catholic scholarship it would be difficult to overestimate, the Abbé, now Mgr. Duchesne, who then held the Chair of Church History at the Paris School of Theology (1878–95). He had at once the learning of a Neander and the irony of a Voltaire. Orthodoxy could pardon him neither ; it dreaded at once his encyclopædic knowledge and his incisive tongue. He taught men to see. For what they saw he was not answerable ; but it was not what the Church wished seen. His examination of the legends which attached to the foundation of the great French Churches, though based on the work of such scholars as Tillemont and the Bollandists, gave offence to modern piety, while his ' Étude sur le Liber Pontificalis ' (1877), saved with difficulty from the ' Index,'

demonstrated the presence of fable in the records of the earliest period of the Christian community at Rome. He refrained from drawing the theological conclusions indicated by his historical criticism. But these could not fail to suggest themselves to his pupils. The study of Christian origins, seriously undertaken, leads to a new conception of ecclesiastical dogma and institutions; tradition and science cannot keep house together in one mind.

Exegesis seemed at first sight less dangerous than history. Catholics, who build on Scripture, plus and interpreted by tradition, could deal more freely, it was thought, with the sacred text than Protestants, who build on Scripture alone. This reasoning overlooked what may be called the regulative function of the Bible. It is not necessary that either the formulas or the institutions of the later Church should be found in Scripture; and as a matter of fact they are not found there. But it is necessary that they should not be in conflict with it. And reference to the sources showed, as it had shown at the Reformation, that this was the case. The ecclesiastical instinct felt rather than discerned this. When the Abbé Loisy, then Professor of Hebrew at the Institut catholique of Paris, dealt on scientific lines with the Canon, the religion of Israel, and the Babylonian myths lying behind the first chapters of Genesis, it cost him his chair. And the Encyclical 'Providentissimus Deus,' in which Leo XIII reasserted the traditional teaching with regard to Scripture that had been formulated by the Councils of Trent and the Vatican, gave expression to the distrust and disapproval of Rome.

To average orthodoxy, Catholic or Protestant, the famous '*L'Évangile et l'Église*,' it must be admitted, was an enigmatic book. As a critic, the author went beyond Harnack, emphasising more strongly the apocalyptic features in Christ's teaching, its points of contact with the mind of his time, its undogmatic and unsystematic character, and the absence from it of any provision for the organisation of the Christian community. Most startling of all, he abandoned the attempt to prove the Resurrection of Christ on the ground of history; it was a fact, he argued—

here agreeing with Harnack—not of history, but for faith. In what is perhaps his literary masterpiece, ‘Autour d’un petit livre,’ and at fuller length in his monumental commentary on the Gospels, he proceeds resolutely, perhaps rather ruthlessly, on these lines. This is not the place for detail ; it will be enough to say that his conclusions do not materially differ from those of such scholars as Jülicher and Joannes Weiss. Nor is this surprising. Critics are not infallible ; nor are their opinions irreversible. But criticism is a science ; its facts are the same for all of us ; and in every subject-matter two and two make four. If this brings him into conflict with ecclesiastical formula, the expert will answer that it is for the latter to justify itself. He at least has no concern with formulas ; they must adjust themselves to fact, if it be fact, not fact to them.

M. Loisy disclaims a speculative philosophy. The time, he probably thinks, is not ripe for such a construction ; and meanwhile, with the help of such notions as symbolism and evolution, the scholar can hold his own. Ultimately, however, a philosophical foundation is a necessity ; it is impossible to state the simplest fact without philosophical implications, because thought is one. The philosophy on which Catholic theology is built, and which from first to last it implies, is the Thomist-Aristotelian ; and the Aristotelian ontology which underlies this underlies the language and thought of the average man. For practical purposes this gives this philosophy an immense advantage ; every one knows, or thinks he knows, what its terms mean. With the later systems it is not so ; they have to be explained, and the explanation is made and retained with difficulty ; habit and imagination carry us the other way.

Scholasticism presents the world as it appears to the unscientific, Kantian and post-Kantian speculation present it as it appears to the scientific man, accentuating the mental element in experience—a *pure* object is unthinkable—and the movement or flux of things. The world-concept of the former is static, that of the latter kinetic ; things, permanent as they may seem, are (it tells us) in a never-ending process ; they are always becoming, they never

are. The former, dealing with fixed quantities, leaves no room for evolution. But a fixed quantity is a notion, not a thing. Nature, in other words, knows nothing of fixed quantities. Do we ask her formula? It is that of Heraclitus; *πάντα ῥεῖ*. Some such philosophy of becoming—I say some such, for philosophy, like the rest of the content of experience, is a becoming, not a thing become—is essential to a scientific theology. It is obvious, however, that it takes us far from the world of the Councils and the schoolmen. It finds the static, or quasi-static, element in things (which is, in effect, the reverse side of the kinetic), not in an abstract substance, or in any formula professing to represent such a substance for thought, but in life. ‘We reach and posit it in every vital action, and most definitely in moral volition’; it is on the will, not the logical understanding, that the so-called Philosophy of Immanence lays stress.

Before passing to other aspects of our subject, the names of two eminent Englishmen must be mentioned, Cardinal Newman and Father Tyrrell. It is impossible to mention Newman’s name without reverence—and regret. He was born free. Oh, that he had been able to retain his birth-right, forfeited to his own loss, and to ours! He was in no sense a Modernist. He accepted the Papacy because it was an essential part of his conception of the Church: to be a Catholic, in the sense in which he understood the word, without the Pope, was, he saw, a contradiction in terms. But no Modernist was ever more alive to the weak points in the theory of Catholicism or to the defective working of its practical system than he. He may be regarded as the Father of Modernism in this sense, that he gave currency to certain root-ideas of the movement. His theory of the development of Christian doctrine, applied on a restricted field, accounted for the differences between the ancient and the mediæval Church; taken largely, it involved an outlook over religion and history which he would no doubt have repudiated, but which, equally without doubt, owes its diffusion to him. While his doctrine of the Illative Sense, as advanced in the ‘Grammar of Assent,’ is incompatible

with Scholastic Intellectualism : the two look different ways. Though he is not named, there can be no doubt that his teaching is aimed at in propositions 25 and 58 of the Syllabus of 1907.

In Father Tyrrell, says Professor Holl, 'the religious motive is found at its strongest and purest.' A convert in early life, disillusionment met him on the threshold : the mirage proved sand. If the unique spiritual life of Catholicism attracted, its obscurantism, its disingenuousness, its ingrained worldliness repelled him : he framed argument after argument to justify the position in which he found himself ; one after another they broke under his feet. His present position—it is common enough among educated Catholics—is that of one

Standing between two worlds—one dead,
The other powerless to be born.

He hopes against hope, and believes against conviction. He 'will not face, because he can so hardly resist,' the impression of doom. Can it be that the Church which so many legions of martyrs, saints, thinkers, and scholars have enriched with their very best, with their heart's blood and their spirit's anguish, is to fall the prey of a selfish and godless bureaucracy ? 'Is this what Catholicism has come to—so grand a name for so mean a thing ?' ¹

For Modernism and Modernists with the death of Leo XIII (1903) the deluge came. The pontificate of Pius X will be remembered as the apotheosis of clericalism—the theory which identifies the Church with the Clergy and religion with the Church. There is no stranger psychological study than that of the clerical mind. I do not speak of the horde of place-hunters who, in every society, attach themselves to the party in power. At Rome, as elsewhere, such persons are nondescripts ; were the Pope a Modernist, they would be Modernists to a man. The clerical mind is a thing apart.

¹ *Mediævalism*, p. 184. Since this was written Father Tyrrell has passed away—July 15, 1909.

Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus
Tam cari capitis ?

Those who possess it are often capable of signal heroism ; their personal holiness is, or seems to be, beyond question ; they are men of interior life, of asceticism, or prayer. But they will do with a light heart what men of the world, little troubled by scruples, scruple at : there is scarcely a crime from which they will shrink ; it would be difficult to find an act of cruelty, of duplicity, or meanness at which they will hesitate—not directly in their own interests (though the two tend to run into one another), but in what they believe to be the interests of God.

Saepius illa
Religio peperit seclerosa atque impia facta.

Was he a heathen and epicurean poet who said it ? The Hebrew seer strikes the same note. ‘Doth God,’ he asks, in sombre irony, ‘need your lie ?’

The new Pope fell from the first into the hands of the ‘piccolo mondo cinquecentesco’ which Leo had instinctively distrusted. The temper which led to the rupture with France was exhibited in every department of the varied activity of the Holy See. The leprosy of delation, never far from the surface where ecclesiastics congregate, broke out : it was the hour of the spy and the informer : the sun of Apostolic favour fell on the assassins of the whisper and the pen. In modern thought, in modern life, in modern society Pius X saw the uprising of the world against the Church, of the layman against the priest—a rebellion against the theocracy which culminated and found its necessary expression in the Roman See. He had the courage of his opinions ; in July 1907, the long-prepared blow fell. The decree ‘Lamentabili,’ condemning sixty-five propositions purporting to represent Modernist teaching, was published ; and a few months later the Encyclical ‘Pascendi’ appeared. The sentiment inspired by these documents is one of sheer amazement : the positions which they denounce so vehemently are for the most part matters not of opinion but of fact. It is not that the world will not accept their teaching, but that this teaching contains a note of interior contradiction and so destroys itself ; it is not that men will not do what the Pope commands them, but that what he commands cannot be done. The practical

provisions take us back to the days of Pius V and Philip II : in every Catholic diocese a Vigilance Committee, sitting in private and receiving reports from persons whose names are kept secret, has been formed to carry them out. This body keeps a watchful eye on suspects ; and, in the words of the Encyclical, takes ' prudent, but prompt and efficacious measures ' in their regard. Priests are the chief victims : the Pope's distrust of the clergy is undisguised. Under Pius X excommunication, like silver in the days of Solomon, is ' nothing accounted of ' ; so broadcast has been its distribution that it is difficult to find a single thinking Catholic by whom it has not been incurred. ' Lord, save us from the perils of modern thought,' is a prayer according to the intention of the Pontiff. ' Yea, Lord, deliver us from all thought at all.' To avoid the difficulty presented by a whole Church under excommunication, canonists have proposed a theory according to which the sentence, where not pronounced ' *nominatim ac personaliter* '—as in the case of M. Loisy and of Don Romolo Murri (in the latter for a political reason)—does not bind till intimated by the Ordinary to those concerned. To judge from the invective of the recent Encyclical ' *Communium Rerum* ' (April 21, 1909) against those who, ' like unnatural children, remain in the bosom of the Church only to rend it,' this theory has not found favour in Rome. For the rest, this pronouncement is directed less against Modernists—who are ' judged already '—than Moderates. It inveighs against those who advocate compromise, conciliation, adjustment—the *esprit concordiste* or *concordataire*. ' They are shamefully deceived who, urged by a vain and false hope of peace, submit the rights of the Church to unjust abatements, as if there could be a mutual understanding between light and darkness, between Christ and Belial. These are the dreams of sick men.'

How will English Churchmen, Established and Free, think of Modernism ? Many Modernist opinions as to the origin and history of dogma and ecclesiastical institutions will certainly be unwelcome to Anglicans ; and much of the exegesis of M. Loisy will fail to commend itself to English

Protestants, Episcopalian or non-Episcopalian, who approach such studies for the first time. This comes, in part at least, from a congenital difference between the French and the English mind. To the French savant it is a point of honour to state the facts, as he sees them, without appreciation or personal judgment, direct or indirect; to us it seems, I think rightly, that in questions which lie near the heart of religion the personal side of the equation cannot be dispensed with—that here to state, in the sense of stating only, is to misstate. English divines, on the other hand, are apt to speak and write with one eye on their subject and another on the standards of their Church. These, excellent in their place, are out of place in scientific work; and reference to them in this connexion, conscious or unconscious, is irritating in the extreme. German, and, I will add, Scottish theologians avoid these pitfalls. They do not divorce fact from its legitimate and necessary background; nor do they import into theological discussion considerations foreign to the matter in hand. I do not, of course, mean that feeling can either produce or change facts. It cannot. But it can, and does, give them life and significance: it can, and does, supply the perspective in which they present themselves and the background against which they stand. These considerations help to bridge the gulf between Modernism and English orthodoxy. That they wholly bridge it I shall not say. Few Englishmen, however, whatever their personal opinions, will doubt that the methods of repression adopted by the Vatican are impossible and immoral. The one because, in the province of thought at least, force is no remedy — ‘on ne tue pas les idées à coups de bâton’; the other, because they are in themselves evil, and we may not do evil that good may come. Religion is strong enough to hold her own in fair conflict. Protestants, at least, have learned by the experience of more than three centuries that liberty is the best guarantee of truth. Differences of opinion there must be; but the growth of knowledge, the general sense of the Church, and the working of the Spirit may be trusted to correct, to balance, to prune. If I lay stress on the first of these factors, it is because

the questions at issue are not primarily religious. Here learned and unlearned are equal; they are 'spiritually discerned.' But science is, and must remain, a thing for experts. No degree of piety will enable the 'cottage dame' to grapple with the Synoptic Problem, or from the scanty indications that have come down to us to reconstruct the Apostolic or the sub-Apostolic Church. The answer of an apostle, or of One greater than an apostle, would perhaps be, could we question him on such subjects, 'Unusquisque in suo sensu abundet' (Rom. xiv. 5). Yet, if science gives the What, charity supplies the How of the solution: it is not truth, as such, that is a Christian virtue, but 'the truth in love.'

Lastly, is the position of the Modernists in the Roman Church legitimate? In the Reformed Churches the tendency is more and more to leave such decisions to the individual conscience. If a man believes that, taken all in all, the Church to which he belongs is teaching truth and doing God's work in the world, he does well to leave the *διακρίσεις διαλογισμῶν*, against which St. Paul warns us, alone. The Pope calls the Modernists many bad names, of which Protestant is the least injurious; and that certain scientific conclusions held by Modernists approximate, or something more than approximate, to those arrived at by Protestant scholars is true. But the angle of vision differs. The notes of unity and universality, it seems to the former, are found with sufficient distinctness only in the Roman communion. They identify Protestantism with individualism. They do not admit its continuity with pre-Reformation religion, nor recognise the identity of substance which exists under diversity of form. Does this make them—of their sincerity, of course, there is no question—consistent Catholics? I think not. We can conceive a Catholicism which would cover their position, but such a Catholicism is not that of the Church of Rome. And we must take this Church not as we think it might be, or should like it to be, but as it is.

It expresses, we saw, the static or absolute conception of the world as opposed to the kinetic, or relative, and between the two an impassable gulf is fixed. It is impossible to express the one in the terms of the other: on the

hypothesis of the latter, the former exhibits a term of the dialectic of life which has been subsumed and overcome. It has passed over into its Other, and survives only in history; it is for thought, not in things. Rome sees this more clearly than the Modernists. The conflict is interne-cine; if the Papacy cannot kill Modernism, Modernism will kill the Papacy, and all for which the Papacy stands. What Rome does not see is that it cannot kill Modernism without committing suicide; that, paradox as it appears, Modernism, while the wound which it inflicts upon Catholicism is mortal, is yet the principle in virtue of which Catholicism lives. For life is movement: and where movement is extinct and excluded, death is near.

What of the future? Well, the average Catholic neither understands nor is interested in these matters. He takes religion as a thing of routine and of feeling; as for the rest, it is the priest's affair, not his. This, more or less, is the attitude of the average man in all the Churches. But the average man, useful as ballast, is not vital. A Church which refuses to look beyond his standpoint has no future: the trunk remains and may stand for centuries—but the sap is dead.

The existing situation is too strained to be lasting; it is probable that the next pope will be a Leo XIV rather than a Pius XI. This will mean a relaxation of the present tension, a certain urbanity and opportunism, a capacity for affairs. Will it mean more than this? Is it conceivable that, as certain Modernists hope, time should bring about a reconciliation between the Church and the Modern spirit? Such a consummation, though directly negatived by the Syllabus of 1864, is not perhaps absolutely impossible. The Church is a woman, says Renan: you never know what she will do next. But it is in the last degree improbable. And this is certain, that, were such an event to come about, she would cease to be, in the theological and ecclesiastical sense of the word, Catholic: her exclusive claims, her *ex opere operato* sacraments, her absolute dogma would be gone. Such a transformation is scarcely within the range of practical politics. Evolution does not mean that anything

can develop out of anything : neither the experience of the past, nor the laws which that experience enables us to trace in human affairs, make it possible for us to look forward to so catastrophic a change. Nineveh is gone, and Babylon and Tyre and Carthage : Rome is passing, it seems, before our eyes. 'Quasi cursores vitai lampada tradunt' : the torch is alight, but the torchbearers disappear. Rome represents a stage through which the Christian idea has passed, but a stage from which it has emerged and to which it will not return. And 'the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath' : Rome was for religion, not religion for Rome.

That its disappearance will be slow is probable—the world is not ripe for its disappearance ; and, till this is so, it will not disappear. The Papacy—if I may repeat what I have said elsewhere—is, and will be for long, a force in politics. It can command votes, it can effect combinations, it impresses the imagination ; it bulks large before the world. But it is a declining power. The stars in their courses fight against it ; the forces which are making history are on the other side. Silently, ceaselessly they work. Like a majestic iceberg, detached from some Arctic continent, it moves southward from the Polar ocean, a fragment of a dead world. Ghostlike, a peril to mariners, it towers over the waters that wash its base : its peaks glitter in the sunlight ; its cliffs reflect the blue of sea and sky. And all the while the process of undermining is going on : the frozen mass encounters kindlier currents ; the temperature rises ; a little sooner, a little later it may be, there can be but one end. 'L'Église ne marche pas dans le sens de la vie ; et la vie la repousse.' And what history and observation demonstrate, philosophy explains. If, and in so far as, Catholicism means the arrest of life, it contains in itself an interior contradiction. For life is one ; and in a world, like ours, in process there are no fixed points, few or many : the stream bears all things on its flow. Unity is indeed a note of the Church, but this unity is one of idea, of direction, of movement. 'Neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem : but in spirit and in truth.'

XIV. PORT ROYAL

It is not easy at first sight to account for the lasting interest excited by Port Royal. The house was dissolved and its inmates were scattered two centuries ago; except Pascal, it produced no writer of the first rank. But its bibliography fills volumes, its literature libraries. Sainte-Beuve's monumental work ranks as a classic; in 1908 M. Lemaître in his 'Conférences' on Racine develops the poet's connexion with 'ces Messieurs,' and the 'Journal des Débats' devotes a feuilleton to 'Le Pèlerinage de Port-Royal.' Nor is this interest confined to France. Mrs. Romanes's 'Story' of the famous convent, and the scholarly and sympathetic study of its great Abbess lately published under the title of 'Angélique of Port Royal,' strike the same note in this country. It is human rather than national. Port Royal stands for an idea which is dear to human nature, and its memories wake an echo in the heart. Its narrow creed belongs, indeed, to those 'little systems' which 'have their day.' The theology of Saint-Cyran and his followers is no longer possible; the asceticism into which they flung themselves so passionately is recognised by us as a self-mutilation, and stands condemned not by the taste only—that were little—but by the deliberate judgment and conscience of a more enlightened and humane age. The tasks to which they dedicated themselves fail to rouse our enthusiasm; in their flight from the world we see a withdrawal from the main stream of life into a stagnant backwater, in the 'direction,' which they prized so highly, a thing of evil, demoralising to directors and directed alike. This must be said; and it cannot be said too strongly. If Arnold, in the pessimistic 'Stanzas from the Grande Char-

treuse,' expressed a mood, R. L. Stevenson, in the robust verse of 'Our Lady of the Snows,' gave utterance to the conviction of the human mind at its sanest :

For still the Lord is Lord of might,
In deeds, in deeds, He takes delight ;
The plough, the spear, the laden barks,
The field, the founded city marks,
Those He approves that ply the trade,
That rock the child, that wed the maid,
That with weak virtues, weaker hands,
Sow gladness on the peopled lands,
And still with laughter, song and shout,
Spin the great wheel of earth about.

But ye ?—O ye who linger still
Here in your fortress on the hill,
With placid face, with tranquil breath,
The unsought volunteers of death,
Our cheerful General on high
With careless looks may pass you by.

Sainte-Beuve's fine epilogue is conceived in the same spirit :

Directeurs redoutés et savants, illustres solitaires, parfaits confesseurs et prêtres, vertueux laïques qui seriez prêtres ailleurs et qui n'osiez prétendre à l'autel, vous tous, hommes de bien et de vérité, quelque respect que je vous aie voué, quelque attention que j'aie mise à suivre et à marquer vos moindres vestiges, je n'ai pu me ranger à être de vous. Si vous étiez vivants, si vous reveniez sur la terre, est-ce à vous que je courrais d'abord ? J'irais une ou deux fois peut-être pour vous saluer et comme par devoir, et aussi pour vérifier en vous l'exactitude de mes tableaux, mais je ne serais pas votre disciple. J'ai été votre biographe, je n'ose dire votre peintre ; hors de là, je ne suis point à vous.¹

But, when all has been said, how much there is that is excellent, admirable, worthy of imitation ! Port Royal is holy ground. For thought, not achievement, is the measure of things. The offerings made to the Temple fed the cupidity of a rapacious priesthood ; but the widow who cast in her

¹ *Port-Royal*, vi. 244.

all was commended; the goodwill of the giver outweighed the use to which her gift was put. It was so here. The mould in which these men and women were cast was heroic: what fell short of the standard of heroism shrivelled in the intensity of the flame. It was a saying of M. Royer-Collard, 'Qui ne connaît pas Port-Royal, ne connaît pas l'humanité.' It was well said. For we are of the race of the gods, and when we meet the divine there is that in us which goes out to it. 'When the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the babe in my womb leaped for joy.'

In the beginning of the seventeenth century monasticism was at a low ebb in France. The grosser scandals of the pre-Reformation period were exceptional. We read, indeed, of an abbess, a sister of the notorious Gabrielle d'Estrées, who was the mother of twelve children, whom she brought up 'selon la qualité du père.' But for the most part the lives of the religious were rather trivial than vicious. Their occupations were frankly secular. At Maubuisson they entertained freely, gave theatrical representations in which they sustained the principal parts, and on Sundays after choir danced by the roadside with the monks of a neighbouring monastery. There was no pretence of enclosure; seculars entered and the religious left the precincts when and as they would. The recitation of office was hurried and perfunctory; the sacrament of penance had become so empty a form that written confessions were passed from hand to hand and mechanically recited as occasion served. When Jacqueline Arnauld, then a child of nine, became abbess, the confessor of the community of Port Royal was a monk so ignorant that he could not translate the Pater Noster. Nor did he know a word of the Catechism; except his breviary he never opened a book. His time was spent in shooting over the convent farms; save on the rare occasion of a profession no sermon had been preached in the church for thirty years. In estimating the sternness of Mère Angélique her experience of relaxed observance must be borne in mind. Under all her finer qualities she remained a capable managing woman of the hard French type. She hated slovenliness and want of method; what she did was done thoroughly and with all her might. The Arnaulds had

a certain strain of strenuousness which recalled their Calvinist ancestry ; the instinct of the Jesuits, which fastened on this blot, as they held it, on the family scutcheon, was sound. There was a time when Jacqueline contemplated flight from the intolerable tedium of the cloister to her Huguenot kinsmen ; and her sister, Anne-Eugénie, hesitated between the Catholic and the Reformed Churches, desiring to serve God in the better of the two, but uncertain which this was.

The view of the religious life taken even by good men was material. It was avowedly regarded as a provision for the younger members of influential families. M. Arnauld, 'le père des nôtres,' was a man of high character, upright and conscientious. Yet he saw nothing wrong in binding children of seven and nine to the obligations of the cloister ; nor did he scruple, in applying to Rome for the Bulls of induction, to make a false entry as to their ages. 'Il était chrétien, mais chrétien selon le monde' is the historians' euphemistic comment. A moralist would describe his action as neither more nor less than fraudulent, a canonist would pronounce Bulls so procured obreptitious, i.e. obtained under false pretences, and consequently null. A few years later the girl-Abbess—she was but fifteen—wavered in what was called her vocation. Her health and spirits failed ; she became conscious of the ghastly parody of religion presented by the life into which she had been entrapped. Her father's eye, keen where the family interests were concerned, detected the symptoms. 'Ma fille, signez ce papier,' he said, handing her a closed document. Furious, but fearing his anger, she signed it. It was a renewal of her religious vows. She resigned herself to the inevitable. But she was not one to acquiesce in half-measures ; if she was to be an Abbess, she would keep and enforce the rule. She had little external help. The Abbot of Citeaux, her immediate superior, was indifferent ; her experience of the wandering friars who from time to time presented themselves at the gate and offered to preach to the religious left much to be desired. The advice given to her by an English Capuchin, never to let a nun speak to a monk or friar, even if he preached like an angel, is significant. Nor were convent chaplains better. 'When the abbess plays the great lady, the

confessor is her lackey,' she wrote; 'when she is humble and respects his office, he becomes masterful and tyrannises over the house. Confessors are nice in their eating; their table must be plentiful and well supplied with dainties. Religious from other houses flock to it, and come in dozens to dine.' Their meddlesomeness, their self-seeking, their vulgar greed disgusted her. Hers, indeed, was not the priest-ridden temper. She would call no man, not even Francis de Sales or Saint-Cyran, father: '*je ne mets pas un homme à la place de Dieu.*'

By degrees the reform advanced. Poverty and obedience became realities; community, choir, enclosure were observed. Bodily penance was not wanting: the fast, the broken sleep, the haircloth; we read of burning wax dropped, by a refinement of torture, on the quivering flesh. But interior mortification held the first place; every natural affection was repressed, every impulse rejected, every activity checked. In vain would men be wiser than their Maker. She found, as Luther had found before her, that peace is not in these things. We need not wonder that she should have sought it in them. A Catholic and a religious of her time, she took the framework of religion as she found it, working upon lines that were none of her making. '*On ne construit pas le bien hors des temps et des circonstances.*' What lay beyond these horizons was outside her view. This is, perhaps, an admission that she stood in the second, not in the first, rank of religious genius. She ran where most of us halt and stumble. But she did not soar.

It was not until Francis de Sales crossed her path that light came. In the saintly Bishop of Geneva piety is seen in its most attractive form. It is impossible to associate him with the Jansenism with which Port Royal was so soon to be identified: '*il était de la race des doux.*' He represented that average opinion which instinctively avoids extremes, smooths over difficulties, and lays stress rather on the spirit than the letter of the Gospel, insisting on its general message, which is clear, rather than on the doubtful sayings found here and there in it, out of which controversies arise. This is not to say that he was without decided

convictions. He held the Gallican view of the authority of General Councils ; he was keenly alive to the lust of domination ingrained in the Papacy, and to the corruptions of the Court of Rome. But piety and prudence forbade him to play the part of a reformer. 'Voilà des sujets de larmes,' he said, 'car d'en parler au monde en l'état où il est c'est causer un scandale inutilement. Ces malades aiment leurs maux et ne veulent point guérir.' It is difficult to say that he was wrong. But ill would it be for the world were silence and tears the only remedies for its evils. There is a more excellent way. To Angélique he was as one sent by God. If direction must be, would that it could have been given to her and hers permanently by one so gentle, so sunny-tempered, so enlightened ! Of the disastrous years during which Sebastian Zamet, Bishop of Langres, guided the community little need be said. The son of an Italian money-lender who had insinuated himself into Court favour, he possessed the worst qualities of his class and race. He represented that odious type of ecclesiastic, the director of women. Ignorant and underbred, a vein of emotional piety sat ill on his vulgar nature. He united the thin unction of the priest to the craftiness and self-seeking of the politician ; vain, meddlesome and unscrupulous, his inordinate appetite for flattery resented the suggestion of criticism with more than feminine spite. 'You condemn us,' he said to Angélique. 'I say nothing,' she replied. 'Your shadow condemns us, then,' was the answer. His policy towards her was one of pin-pricks ; her greatness was a reproach to his small soul. At the end of three years came deliverance ; the period of Saint-Cyran set in. Henceforward the fortunes of the community ran on definite lines. For good or for evil, Jansenism took possession of it : Port Royal became the Mecca of that sombre creed.

To estimate the significance of Jansenism it is necessary to glance at the circumstances of the Church of the time. The Counter-Reformation had spent itself. It had won back for Catholicism much of the ground that had been lost in the preceding century ; but to bring about this result factors of unequal ethical value had combined. That zeal and piety

were among their number is beyond question : it is equally beyond question that forces of more than questionable character had been their active allies. Custom, fear, cupidity—all these motives had been worked upon ; if a Francis de Sales did not disdain the appeal to them, we may conceive their prominence in the policy of men less virtuous and less humane. One appeal, that to the understanding, had been overlooked ; and without this no religious work endures. For this appeal means, in the last resort, truthfulness ; and truthfulness in the teacher is the condition of belief in the taught. They mistake who denounce the understanding as blind, cold and barren, an obstacle to be overcome by faith. It would be a poor religion indeed which stopped short at the understanding, leaving the heart and the will untouched. But intellectual assent, while not itself religion, is the soil in which religion takes root ; if it be wanting, the plant withers away. This is why revivals are transient ; they come and go. If the ground under them is solid, they have their uses ; but they are supported, not supporting ; conviction is the rock upon which creeds are built. The learning of the Counter-Reformation was a *πάρεργον* : its aim was the silencing of opponents, not the attainment of truth. Could this be effected, truth for its own sake was of small account ; and the evil tradition was not soon overcome. We meet it at every stage of the controversies of which Port Royal became the centre. But while it is often difficult to discern fact not only from fiction but from the presentation of fact, and while ‘the notion and analysis of veracity is scarcely older than our time,’ a distinction is to be drawn. The statements of men who think and feel strongly on points of controversy are not to be taken on trust. But prejudice is one thing ; bad faith another. Sainte-Beuve sums up the recriminations of Jesuits and Jansenists in a weighty judgment :

Je sais les Jansénistes très capables de prévention ; mais quand c'est un Lancelot qui parle, quand c'est un Tillemont, quand c'est un Saci, j'ai en effet une extrême confiance en eux, et je ne fais aucune comparaison du degré de créance que méritent ces langues sincères et ces plumes véridiques à ce qui est dû raisonnablement à leurs

adversaires. Ceux-ci par habitude, par éducation et discipline sont essentiellement sujets à manquer de bonne foi et de droiture. Pascal le savait bien, et moi-même (si j'en puis parler de mon humble expérience) je le sais aussi.

The seventeenth century was an age of scholarship ; Huet and Richard Simon, Petavius and Sirmond adorned the Gallican Church. Nor was the morality of this Church that of the casuists ; the solid teaching of Bossuet held its ground. But in theology and in morals alike this tradition of learning and austerity was going out of fashion ; the market was overrun with slighter wares. Scholastic formula was replacing positive and historical method ; the Fathers were neglected ; Scripture, instead of being studied for its own sake, was treated, often with ludicrous results, as a storehouse of texts to be brought forward in support of received opinions. And the lax morality denounced by Pascal went hand in hand with this artificial science, the facility of which ensured its popularity, while its adoption by the powerful Society of Jesus secured for it the patronage of the Court and the support of Rome. To serious men it was clear that religion stood in grave peril ; that a general impoverishment and lowering of standards, moral and intellectual, had set in. All that was sound in the Church rose in active opposition ; it was not only the Jansenists who were in revolt. The Gallicanism of Bossuet, the interior piety of Fénelon, the Quietism of Molinos and Mme. Guyon, were parts of the same protest ; we have seen what was in the mind of that gentlest of saints, Francis de Sales. The rock upon which this opposition was shattered was the paramount value attached to unity, which has ever proved fatal to the reform of Catholicism from within. The dilemma is one from which there is no escape. To go outside this unity is to cease to be a Catholic ; to remain within is to be crushed by a pressure which makes itself felt at all points and is as immense as it is ubiquitous. When unity means more than truth, controversy leads to a foregone conclusion. ' L'unité lui paraissait si essentielle et si fondamentale,' says Sainte-Beuve of the Bishop of Geneva,

‘qu’il y a tout dirigé, qu’il y a fait plier le détail, là même où il le sentait faux et gâté.’ The fact that souls of singular beauty have acted on this principle cannot blind us to its radical insincerity. Not so are the battles of the world or the ventures of faith won.

The Abbé de Saint-Cyran was not a beautiful soul—he was too rugged, too little human for beauty—but he was a man of exceptional learning, of perfect honesty, and of unbending will. Above all, his singleness of mind was absolute. Behind Bossuet we are conscious of the Church—the great politico-ecclesiastical organisation whose claims overbear even religious interests; behind Francis de Sales stand souls for whose guidance compromise and accommodation are necessary; behind Saint-Cyran is one figure only, cold, unadorned, impersonal—that of Truth. Truth, be it understood, as he saw it: more is neither given to nor required of man. We live in a world of truths rather than of truth. Hence controversies. ‘Chaque chose ici-bas a deux noms : le troisième, qui est le vrai, s’il existe quelque part, n’est qu’en Dieu. Le chercher, et parfois le deviner, est le plaisir du sage.’

The teaching known, inaccurately, as Paulinism has been from the first a ferment in the Church. Marcion, Augustine, Calvin, Jansenius—such are the names that it recalls to us: it has played a leading part in every attempt at reformation or revival. Inaccurately—for this teaching is precisely what that of St. Paul was not, i.e. systematic. His epistles are essentially *Flugschriften*—addressed to individuals or to local communities and destined to meet temporary needs. The theories respecting grace, the fall, predestination, &c., read into the Epistle to the Romans reflect the mind of a later age. The writer had in view certain questions at issue between the Synagogue and the Church at a critical and now forgotten period of history; in discussing them he worked on material taken from the Rabbinical schools and familiar to his correspondents; it was not his intention to communicate an inspired psychology, to reveal the secrets of the Divine purpose in creation, or to foreshadow the ultimate destinies of mankind. Augustine, not Paul, is

the father of Paulinism ; it was from Augustine that Jansenius took the rigorous dogmatic system which is associated with his name.

More, perhaps, than any one man since its Founder this great African Father has left his mark upon the Church. His influence was the outcome of his intense humanity ; he was pre-eminently a Son of Man. He was as subtle of head as of heart ; but the small personality that so often goes with subtlety of this sort, the timidity, the disingenuousness, the excess of caution, were foreign to him. His horizons were vast ; he was daring to audacity ; he was a large, an ardent, a complete man. He had lived life to the full ; he had known passion, ambition, achievement, the fetter of self, the weariness of the finite, the inevitableness of death. The conclusion was surrender to a new life principle, the introduction of which effected a sharp separation between old and new. On that side of the line all was evil, not relatively only, but of its very nature and without qualification ; on this, a new creature in Christ. Here only was rest. 'Fecisti nos, Domine, ad te, et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in te.' If the conclusion was justified by common as well as personal experience, the form taken by it in the mind of Augustine was conditioned by the temperament and the past of the man. That Augustinianism was a new doctrine, in the sense that it was a reconstruction of data which had hitherto existed in other combinations, is certain. It stood to the theologies which preceded it—the Alexandrian, the Cappadocian, that of the Apologists—as the Christology of the Fourth Gospel stands to that of the Synoptics. It was a rendering, one of many possible renderings, of Christianity ; the contention of the Jansenists that it, and it only, was Christianity cannot be maintained.

Its central point was the entire corruption of human nature. As a consequence of Adam's fall man had lost grace, freedom, goodness ; not a vestige of these gifts and endowments was left. The common teaching of the Church was, and is, that they had been diminished ; Augustine held that they had been destroyed. The 'I was shapen in wickedness'

of the Psalmist was not literature, but dogma. 'Tenebatur justa damnatione genus humanum, et omnes erant irae filii.'¹ Salvation was by grace; and this grace was independent of the dispositions of the recipients; it was given to the elect only; it was not God's will to save all. These premisses were pressed to their extremest conclusions: an evil tree could not bring forth good fruit. Too short and simple a division: how often evil is done by good, good by evil, men! The inference being that the colours of good and evil are mixed; and that, if we will talk of grace, its action must be conceived as co-extensive with human nature; pure good or pure evil is scarcely found. Far from Augustine was such a solution. He was an abstract, not a concrete, thinker, a man of hard-and-fast lines. Here were the sheep, there the goats; that the goats could be sheepish, and the sheep goatish, this he could not conceive. He shrank from no paradox; and when reason and conscience protested, he fell back upon the '*O Altitudo!*' of the Apostle. 'How unsearchable are his judgments, and His ways past finding out!' The grace given to the elect was invincible: they could not but follow; those not of their number were outside God's Fatherhood; their virtues were splendid sins. Taken with the sacramentalism of the time, this involved the literal damnation of unbaptised infants; all that could be conceded to them was a *mitissima poena*—'the easiest room in hell.' That such an understanding as Augustine's should have been the prey of these evil dreams would be incredible had we not daily experience of the perversity of logic, and of the fatal power of parcelling out the mind into watertight compartments possessed by very able men. Nor must we forget that at the time at which these opinions became current few would have seen in them anything to cause horror or surprise. When the barbarians swept over Europe, civilisation was extinguished; darkness came down upon the world. Inured to violence in every shape, men became brutalised. The marvel was not that God should revenge Himself cruelly upon His enemies—seeing that He had the forces of the universe at His disposal,

¹ *Enchiridion*, p. 33.

this was what was to be expected—but that He should spare any of them ; it was here that the miracle of compassion came in. As time went on, this account of the matter ceased to be convincing. It was qualified, toned down, supplemented ; theologians retained the formula, embarrassing as it was, but devised a new interpretation ; the semi-Pelagianism which Augustine attacked, the Molinism and Arminianism which Jansenist and Calvinist respectively combated, represent that *opinion moyenne*, as Renan calls it—‘cet ensemble de Christianisme général et vulgaire, tel qu’il s’est autorisé à travers des siècles, et particulièrement dans toute l’Église catholique par une transaction insensible.’¹

Keenly alive to the mischief threatened by the tendencies then dominant in the Church and to the unreality of popular religion, Saint-Cyran looked back, not forward, without, not within. He was of the Law rather than the Gospel. A man of authority, he looked to letter and precedent and flung himself into this Augustinian theology without reserve. With his friend and fellow-student Jansenius he read the works of the Saint ten times, those directed against Pelagianism thirty times, from cover to cover. The study left him the man of one book. He was steeped in the mind of his author : all that was in Augustine was to be upheld. This apotheosis of the great Doctor was carried to grotesque lengths. Jansenist writers, Richard Simon tells us, maintained gravely that, though ignorant of Hebrew, he had discerned the sense of the Hebrew Scriptures more accurately than those conversant with the language in which they were written. Saint-Cyran had great qualities, and they were just those in which his opponents were wanting. His learning was genuine, he was in deadly earnest, his disinterestedness was beyond question ; he never feared the face of man. These qualities were the secret of his power ; but he inspired respect rather than affection. His belief in himself was phenomenal ; his temper was hard almost to harshness ; he led men to fear rather than to love God. For him darkness overshadowed the mercy seat. ‘Sa grandeur est terrible’ was the cry that broke from him

¹ Sainte-Beuve, *Port-Royal*, ii. 131.

at the thought of the gentle Mother of the Saviour. Predestination killed intercession; the springs of consolation were poisoned at their source. The Jansenism for which he stood was a consistent attempt to work out the traditional theology of Christendom. What it forgot was that this was a theology from which Christendom was escaping. Corrupt as their system was in detail and in tendency, on the main issue the Jesuits were nearer the truth than he. The moral grandeur of Port Royal commands our admiration; its opponents repel us by their superficial temper, their mendacity, their lax fibre. Who does not echo Sainte-Beuve's apostrophe to Rapin?

Vous n'avez jamais songé à penser par vous-même. Les vives sources chrétiennes vous échappent, de même que les générosités de nature vous sont étrangères. Le dirai-je? Vous êtes trop mondain, trop répandu, vous dînez trop souvent en ville, mon Réverend Père.¹

But the element of contradiction which Jansenism contained was ineradicable. It deepened and intensified religion; it rescued the sacraments from the mechanism to which they had been degraded; it preached a Saviour, though in this Saviour it was difficult to discover either the Jesus of the Gospels or the Eternal Christ. But the *Sinite parvulos* was wanting; nothing could be less fatherlike than the Jansenist God. It exalted redemption at the expense of creation; it took from the Father to give to the Son. The action of grace became as little natural, as purely a thing of magic, as that of the sacraments in popular Catholicism; fetishism, thrown out of the window, came in by the door. Worst of all, its creed of terror did violence to the moral sense. Conversion was necessary, but of a thousand souls not one attained it; 'direction' was essential, but not one priest in ten thousand—here it spoke truly—was qualified to direct. 'Je sais que Dieu peut me sauver,' wrote the unhappy Marie-Claire; 'mais quelle obligation a-t-il de faire ce miracle? J'adore le jugement qu'il fera de moi avec tremblement et tranquillité.' *Tremblement—*

¹ *Port-Royal*, i. 484.

this was the last word. *Laboramus pro incerto*: 'man knoweth not whether he is worthy of love or hate.'

'Cela est dur, mais il faut convenir que chrétiennement cela est vrai,' says Sainte-Beuve. 'Tous ceux qui le déguisent oublient le christianisme ou le transforment.' We join issue. The religious consciousness takes two forms, as it conceives God near to or far from man. Each falls in with certain of our moods and corresponds to certain facts of our environment. But while the latter from the fourth century onward has been dominant in the official teaching of the Church, it is foreign to her Founder. Not a word, not a suggestion of it is to be found in the Gospels. Jesus knows nothing of a Deity to be appeased by blood, of original sin, or of imputed righteousness. The question *Cur Deus homo?* receives from Him a simpler answer: 'the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.' He taught no austere doctrine of penance. In the parable of the Prodigal Son we find His account of God's dealing with sinners; if He would have driven the casuists from the Temple, would He have spared their opponents the reproach addressed to the too impetuous disciples, 'You know not what spirit you are of'? The danger common to all theologies is that the comment kills the text. This, buried under a mass of extraneous matter, is forgotten; the whole is transformed. Never was this more conspicuously the case than with Jansenism. Its harsh and gloomy doctrines belong to that core of darkness in human nature on which religion and civilisation act as solvents. 'The Father Himself loveth you'; this is the charm that dissipates their sombre questionings; to possess it is to have passed beyond them into light.

Behind the theological issue the question resolves itself, as such questions generally do, into one of philosophical standpoint. Is the ultimate explanation of the world and of life dualistic or monistic? Are we thrown back upon God plus the Devil? or upon a Divine Being beside whom there is room for no other—God? The former account of the matter suggests itself to man at an early stage of progress; but it is to the latter that the best mind and conscience of

the race gravitate. In poetry, in art, last of all in religion, it has won recognition, and the difficulties which attend it, while unsolved, and perhaps insoluble on our present plane of existence, are seen to be less than those inseparable from the other view. Placed in a monistic setting, the teaching which gives everything in the conduct of the world and of life to God commands assent; it is this, seen in a glass darkly, that has commended it to many who were far from suspecting, and would have been further from admitting, the premisses which it presupposed. Even so it requires to be supplemented by a far-reaching pragmatism. We must conceive God *as if* He were one of conflicting forces; we must act *as if* we were free agents, and *as if* the result depended upon our action. The Augustinian doctrine is a philosophical speculation mistranslated into a theological formula; inevitable as a background, it is impossible as a working theory of life. For goodness is the primary attribute of divinity; men will not worship a God whose morality is lower than their own; while conscience and common-sense brush away the scholastic figment of a God in whom goodness means a quality incommensurable with that known to us as goodness. In Mill's famous outburst against sophistry of this sort the voice of the Theism innate in human nature speaks:

Whatever power such a being may have over me, there is one thing which he shall not do: he shall not compel me to worship him. I will call no being good who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow-creatures. And if such a being can sentence me to hell for not so-calling him, to hell I will go.¹

How did Port Royal become a storm-centre? In the reform of a religious house and the revival of observance there was nothing that could give offence to authority. Nor was the hold of Jansenism on the community a sufficient reason. The religious were not theologians; Saint-Cyran was dead before the persecution opened; had the question

¹ *Examination of Sir W. Hamilton's 'Philosophy,'* p. 129.

been one of doctrine only, time and changes that time brings with it might have been trusted to bring about the desired result. The reason lay deeper.

It was not really to Saint-Cyran or to Saint-Cyran's doctrine that the persecution was directed. It was not a matter of repudiating any particular doctrine or any particular course of conduct; it was not one of the persecutions that spring from rage at an accomplished fact. But it was born of apprehension of an infinitude of possibilities; it was the element of the unknown that their (the Jesuits') wisdom detected and taught them to fear supremely in Port Royal.¹

Absolute Governments have an instinctive distrust of anything like concerted action on the part of their subjects. This distrust dates from the Roman Empire; to this day the right of association is regarded in Latin countries with a jealous eye. Louis XIV was the embodiment of the absolutist temper: *L'état c'est moi* was more than an epigram, it was a system of government. These tendencies of the Latin State are accentuated in Latin Christianity, which has built an autocracy on the ruins of the congregationalism of the early Church. This survives only in history; the power of initiative and of individual or group action, the autonomy of the local communities, have been withdrawn. Given this state of things in Church and State, Port Royal was a danger. It taught men that they were responsible not only to an authority outside the self, but to God and conscience; it bade them think and act for themselves. And this in spite of itself. Advanced ideas, political and religious, were foreign to those who spoke for it. Arnault wrote in defence of the exiled Stuarts; Quesnel advocated Filmer's doctrine of non-resistance; Saint-Cyran would not take up a book written by a heretic till he had exorcised it, '*ne doutant point que le Démon n'y résidât actuellement*'; Jansenius submitted his book and his teaching to the judgment of the Holy See. Nor is there any reason to question their sincerity. They were incapable of deception;

¹ A.K.H., *Angélique of Port Royal*, p. 214.

and there was every reason why they should have held the opinions which they professed to hold.

But there is a movement in thought and in history which carries men without their knowledge to a goal which they neither desire nor foresee. It was so here. The fundamental principle of the absolutism dominant in Church and State was that the individual should give himself over to a system which charged itself in the one case with his moral, in the other with his material, welfare. To certain temperaments the prospect is attractive. One is taken in and done for; responsibility is removed, or at least lightened; the trouble of thinking is saved. But in fact it is neither realised nor capable of realisation. The wise despot is a fiction of political philosophy; neither despots nor despotisms are wise. And, were it otherwise, they would be useless for the purpose in view. Responsibility cannot be put off; thinking, like digestion, cannot be done for us. The citizen, the Christian, must be such in virtue of his own effort; he is not turned out ready made from a machine. Of this Port Royal was profoundly conscious; and the consciousness made for independence.

Malgré tout, malgré ces preuves positives et ces dénégations sincères, comme si la situation était plus forte que les hommes, une certaine veine secrète, sinon de rébellion, au moins d'indépendance au temporel, n'a cessé de courir dès l'origine et de se gonfler peu à peu dans la postérité de Port-Royal.¹

So, too, in the religious sphere. Saint-Cyran distinguished, Lancelot tells us, between the Roman Church and the Court of Rome. It is a dangerous distinction; admit it and others follow; the hard-and-fast lines so dear to theologians break down. Nor was he the man to draw back for fear of consequences; he followed where the thought led. The Council of Trent was a political assembly; the schoolmen, St. Thomas at their head, had been the ruin of theology; most evil-sounding of all, for five or six hundred years the Church had ceased to exist. The bed of the river

¹ Sainte-Beuve, *Port-Royal*, ii. 200.

remained, but muddy, turbid waters had replaced the crystal stream of early days. This was not Catholicism as Rome understood it ; perhaps it was not Catholicism in any sense.

La religion qu'ils adoptèrent à Port-Royal, et que Saint-Cyran leur exprima, était (civilement, politiquement parlant, et sinon d'intention, du moins d'instinct et de fait) l'essai anticipé d'une sorte de tiers-état supérieur, se gouvernant lui-même dans l'Église, une religion non plus romaine, non plus aristocratique et de cour, non plus dévotieuse à la façon du petit peuple, mais plus libre des vaines images, des cérémonies ou splendides ou petites, et plus libre aussi, au temporel, en face de l'autorité ; une religion, sobre, austère, indépendante, qui eut fondé véritablement une réforme gallicane. Ce qu'on a entendu par ce mot ne portait que sur des réserves de discipline et sur une jurisprudence, une procédure sorbonnique, en quelque sorte extérieure. Le Jansénisme, lui, cherchait une base essentielle et spirituelle à ce que les Gallicans (plus prudemment, sans doute) n'ont pris que par le dehors, par les maximes coutumières et par les précédents. L'illusion fut de croire qu'on pouvait continuer d'exister dans Rome en substituant un centre si différent.¹

The instinct of self-preservation warned king and Pope alike against this spirit. The suspicion that the foundations of the existing order were less secure than appeared on the surface made them resolute to suppress inconvenient questions. Later the deluge ; things would last their time.

The posthumous publication of the 'Augustinus' was the signal for the opening of the campaign. The book, as its name implied, was a republication of the theology of Augustine, whose great name might have sheltered it in quieter times. But the doctrine of interior grace was already compromised. To the keen instinct of Rome it was a halfway house to Protestantism. The notion of interior grace did not easily accommodate itself to that of exterior means of grace and of a privileged order that dispensed them ; between spirit and letter there is a natural war. In 1567 Pius V had condemned seventy-nine propositions of

¹ *Ibid.* i. 15,

the Louvain theologian, Baius ; and the controversy still smouldered. The door, however, had not been closed. ' *Quamquam nonnullae aliquo pacto sustineri possent in rigore et proprio verborum sensu ab auctoribus intento* ' were the words of the Bull *Ex omnibus afflictionibus* ; and the issue of the Congregations' *De Auxiliis*, which dragged on for nine years (1598-1607), had been doubtful. Molina's famous *Concordantia* escaped, though narrowly, the censure of the official theologians of the Vatican : in the interests of peace, however, silence from recrimination had been imposed on the contending parties ; and the appendix to the ' *Augustinus*,' in which the author drew a parallel between the teaching of the semi-Pelagians and that of the Jesuit theologians, Lessius, Molina and Vasquez, violated the pact. It was enough. The atmosphere was electric, and the storm burst. The ' *Augustinus* ' was published at Louvain in 1640. Three years later Urban VIII renewed and confirmed the Constitutions of Pius V and Gregory XIII on Grace ; in 1649 the Five Propositions were censured by the Sorbonne, and, on the demand of twenty-five French bishops, condemned by Innocent X.

They were the following :

1. Some commandments of God are impossible to righteous men who will and endeavour, according to their present power, to keep them ; and the grace by which they might become possible is wanting.

[This was pronounced temerarious, impious, blasphemous, condemned under anathema, and heretical.]

2. In the state of fallen nature interior grace is never resisted. [Heretical.]

3. In the state of fallen nature freedom from necessity is not required for merit or demerit ; freedom from coercion suffices. [Heretical.]

4. The semi-Pelagians admitted the necessity of prevenient interior grace for every single action, and even for the beginning of faith. They were heretics in holding this grace to be such that the will of man could either resist or obey it. [False and heretical.]

5. It is semi-Pelagian to say that Christ died and shed His blood for all men without exception. [False, temerari-

ous, scandalous ; and, understood in the sense that Christ died for the salvation of the predestined only, impious, blasphemous, contumelious, derogatory to the divine goodness, and heretical.]

With regard to the substance of these propositions, the general sense of the Christendom of to-day, Protestant as well as Catholic, is with the Pope. Without the belief that God fills all things, that is, the philosophy (as it is now called) of immanence, the belief in predestination is a nightmare. 'Voilà la conclusion janséniste dans sa simplicité rigoureuse. L'homme n'est plus l'enfant de Dieu. Il n'est même plus le serviteur de Dieu ; il vit et meurt esclave d'une sorte de divinité farouche, forgée à la place de Dieu.'¹ Not all the virtues of Port Royal could make this otherwise than a detestable creed. Better Escobar and Bauny than devil-worship of this kind ; the cure is easier, the effects are less deadly. But it was round the 'question of fact' that the controversy raged. Were these propositions contained in Jansenius' book ? If they were, said a wit, they were there incognito. The Jansenists denounced the 'enfantement monstrueux' of those who professed to discern them ; Bossuet acclaimed their selection as the fruit 'de cette connaissance exquise et du concert des meilleurs cerveaux de la Sorbonne.' The truth is that, with the exception of the first, they were constructive, and stood for what, in the opinion of its opponents, was the outcome of Jansenism. When we add that they were legitimate inferences from the book, it must be remembered that charges of constructive heresy, as of constructive treason, are to be distrusted. The drafting of an opponent is open to suspicion ; and propositions divorced from their context lose perspective ; to judge them fairly they must be taken as parts of a whole. In this case, too, the mass of ecclesiastical and theological authority that could be brought forward for the propositions, even as they stood, was a legitimate *argumentum ad hominem*. The Jansenists took their stand on St. Augustine. 'Do you condemn him ?' they asked ; and no one dared to answer in the affirmative. 'If you do

¹ Monlaur, *Angélique Arnauld*, p. 387,

not, we are free.' The Church changes, though she never admits that she changes—this is the key to the controversy—and she resents the demonstration of the fact.

It would be unreasonable to credit the nuns of Port Royal with definite views on the points at issue. They were religious, not theologians ; they raised no difficulty as to the *question de droit*. But the *question de fait* was another thing. When they were called upon not only to condemn the propositions, but to declare that they were contained in a book which they had not read, and which Saint-Cyran had approved, they refused. The formula proposed to them was :

I condemn in my heart and by my words the doctrine of the Five Propositions of Cornelius Jansen, contained in the book called the 'Augustinus,' which has been condemned by Innocent X and Alexander VII ; which doctrine is not that of St. Augustine, but wrongly explained by Jansenius, contrary to the mind of the saint.

That they should have been blamed for refusing this test is a striking proof of the immorality of subscription. The declaration contained statements obviously beyond their competence. They had not read Jansenius, and could not possibly have any opinion as to the correctness of his interpretation of St. Augustine. Morally, their signature would have been equivalent to a repudiation of all by which they set store in religion and of the faithful men whose ministry had been approved among them. To consciences unversed in casuistry and keenly alive to the moral evil for which the forces behind their opponents stood, this seemed an apostasy. 'Plutôt souffrir mille morts que de mentir une seule fois.' Or, in the words of a scholar of our own time from whom a similar submission was demanded :

Il ne faut pas me parler de sacrifices que la conscience interdit. Ce qui m'a toujours empêché de donner à l'autorité ecclésiastique la satisfaction qu'elle réclame c'est l'impossibilité où je serais de me supporter un seul instant si j'avais publiquement confessé que je tiens pour faux ce que je sais être vrai et réciproquement.¹

¹ A. Loisy, *Quelques Lettres*, 184.

Equivocation was as impossible as direct falsehood. 'What difference is there between these sophisms,' asked Jacqueline Pascal, 'and offering incense to an idol under the excuse that it has a cross up its sleeve?' They were the victims of that organised calumny in which orthodoxy is expert. They were Calvinists, anti-sacramentarians, allies of Cromwell and the English Puritans; the pretended compact of Bourg-Fontaine, to which Jansenius, Saint-Cyran and Antoine Arnauld (then—1621—a child of nine) were said to have been parties, aimed at the establishment of Deism in place of Christianity. Arnauld's comment is pointed: 'Quand les Jésuites ont une fois avancé une calomnie ils ne la retirent jamais.'

In 1661 the blow fell. The community was forbidden to receive postulants or pupils; the solitaries were scattered, the schools closed. The affair dragged on with varying fortunes. In 1669 the so-called 'Peace of the Church' secured a ten years' respite; then the final persecution opened, which ended a generation later in the dispersal of the religious, the destruction of the buildings that had sheltered them, the removal even of their dead—a removal carried out with every circumstance of indecency and sacrilege. 'The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the air, and the flesh of thy saints unto the beasts of the land.'

Grâce à une incurie sans nom succédant à de longues suggestions iniques, il y eut sous Louis XIV., à deux pas de Versailles, des actes qui rappellent ceux de 1793. On le lui rendit trop bien à ce superbe monarque, et à toute sa race, le jour de la violation des tombes royales à Saint-Denis.¹

Of those on whom the responsibility for these things fell, the ecclesiastical authorities in France, and even at Rome, were half-hearted; left to themselves they would have acted otherwise than they did. The unrelenting enemies of Port Royal were Louis XIV and the Jesuits. The king's jealousies and fears centred in the community, which became the object of his profound aversion. Here was something in which he, round whom the worlds circled,

¹ Sainte-Beuve, *Port-Royal*, vi. 239,

counted little ; ' when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not down nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.' That in the affair of the Régale the Port Royalists had supported the Pope increased his irritation. It is not easy to say how far his alliance with the Jesuits was voluntary. Their ends were not his. But he did not, perhaps, look far ahead ; in the meantime they served his purpose, and he theirs. It was as well even for kings to keep on good terms with the powerful Order. Père la Chaise, it is said, when dying, warned him to take a Jesuit as his confessor, with the scarcely veiled threat that the society contained all sorts of men. So Saint-Simon, whose picture of Tellier, the successor of La Chaise in that office, is lurid :

Sa tête et sa santé étoient de fer, sa conduite en étoit aussi ; son naturel cruel et farouche. Il étoit profondément faux, trompeur, caché sous mille plis et replis. C'étoit un homme terrible, qui n'allait à rien moins qu'à destruction ; ignorant à surprendre, insolent, impudent, ne connaissant ni monde ni mesure, ni degrés, ni ménagements. Je me suis étendu sur ce nouveau confesseur, parce que de lui sont sorties les incroyables tempêtes sous lesquelles l'Église, l'État, le devoir, la doctrine, et tant de gens de bien de toutes les sortes gémissent encore aujourd'hui.

There are times when the spirit that guides the movement of contemporary history takes shape in individuals. Such representative figures were the priest and the penitent, Tellier and Louis XIV.

It is neither necessary nor permissible to suppose that all the virtues were on one side. Not all the actions of the saints are saintly. Individuals or sections of the community at war with the community as a whole seldom escape the sectarian temper ; they become soured, contentious, partisan. The Jansenists, in particular those of the second generation, did not escape this danger ; there are incidents in their history and traits in their character from which we turn away. But lesser truths may obscure greater. The fact remains that with all their limitations

they stood for liberty against bondage, for truth against falsehood, for light against darkness. Their mischievous doctrine of grace would have dropped from them; their lofty and inspiring character would have remained. Could they have found a resting-place in the Church and in France the tempest of the Revolution had been less destructive. Port Royal was an attempt—unhappily an unsuccessful attempt—to arrest the process of interior decay in religious and national life; to make out of the France of the old *régime*, feudal, Catholic, and monarchical, ‘une nation instruite, honnête, ayant souci du vrai.’ The Catholic revival of the nineteenth century was political rather than religious; and even politically it bulked larger in imagination than in fact. The masses were untouched by it; the movement of society and thought was on other lines and in another direction: ‘L’Église ne marche pas dans le sens de la vie; et la vie la repousse.’ It is the misfortune of Catholicism that, as a religion, it is overweighted by its polity. This polity, the bequest of a dead world, bears in itself the seeds of dissolution. It pursues material rather than spiritual ends, and this with singular fatuousness; allying itself with just those elements in society that are moribund. The parallel to Mohammedanism is striking:

Unfortunately, the great Arabian reformer of the seventh century was driven by the necessities of his position to do more than found a religion. He endeavoured to found a social system, with results which are thus stated by a close observer of the strong and the weak points of Islam. ‘As a religion,’ Mr. Stanley Lane-Poole says, ‘Islam is great. It has taught man to worship one God with a pure worship who formerly worshipped many gods impurely. As a social system it is a complete failure.’¹

Attempts to overcome this interior contradiction have not been wanting. They have failed, as such attempts, it seems, must fail in a society in which authority is absolute. The time comes when the reformer must either resist this authority, which then expels him from the society, or cease to reform. Harnack pictures a reforming Pope using the

¹ Lord Cromer, *Modern Egypt*, ii. 134.

Infallibility with which the Vatican Council armed him to free the Church from the bondage of tradition.¹ The signs point in the opposite direction :

Un prêtre détruit rarement l'autel dont il vit.

And the higher his place in the hierarchy the less likely he is to do so. It is safe to prophesy that reform will not come from Rome.

The Liberal Catholicism associated with Lamennais and the brilliant group of writers—Lacordaire, Montalembert, &c.—which followed him was primarily a protest against the alliance between the Church and the Restoration Monarchy. This, Lamennais saw, was fatal in principle and in policy ; it bound a living to a dead idea. He proposed to dissolve it by an appeal on the one hand to the Papacy, and on the other to the democratic movement of the age. Neither of these forces welcomed the proposed partnership : the Pope distrusted the democracy, and the democracy the Pope. On the defection of its leader this Liberalism developed on general lines. It laid stress rather on the Catholic idea than on its actual embodiment ; it attempted to reconcile tradition with science ; it adopted Cavour's formula, a Free Church in a Free State. This evaded rather than met the difficulty. Plausible as it was, it offered no real solution, because society is not two, but one.

The ground occupied by the Munich school was historical rather than political ; it criticised the setting of the religious idea. The doctrines and institutions of Catholicism took shape at a period when men's knowledge of the past was rudimentary. ' Il semble que les âmes fussent alors baignées dans un demijour où rien ne paraissait distinct.' Nor did the question of fact interest the mind of the age. It would never have occurred to a mediæval theologian to ask whether a conclusion which he sought to establish was historical, or to his opponent to question it from that standpoint. The question was, Was it contained in premisses already accepted ? The fallacy of logic had undisputed sway. Working on such lines and with such methods tradition had become

¹ *Dogmengeschichte*, iii. 680,

mountainous. Divines had piled up an enormous superstructure on the slightest possible foundations; when these were examined the insecurity of the structure became clear. Döllinger, originally an Ultramontane, was led unwillingly but inevitably to his conclusions because the facts were so. The point on which he concentrated was the Papacy. The primitive Primacy, not indeed of the Roman Bishop, but of the Church of Rome, political rather than religious in origin, lay far in the background; it had been buried under successive after-growths of the centuries that lay between it and to-day. What had been built upon it was a highly centralised politico-ecclesiastical absolutism, whose development could be traced in history and for which it was impossible to claim a more than relative right. It had played its part and served its purpose; it had done good and evil, deserved praise and blame. But it belonged to the framework of things, not to their substance; like the Sabbath, it was made for man. Dogma was on one side; history on the other: it was a choice between the two. The Vatican Council decided for dogma; and because the schism that followed was on a small scale it seemed to superficial observers that the controversy was closed. But the undermining process at work in Catholicism was accelerated; it is by erosion and secret sapping, not by fissure, that the dissolution of the seemingly massive system takes place.

In England the religious philosophy of Newman gave Catholicism an interpretation under which it ceased to be a negligible quantity. His temperament was that of the artist; he was led out of Protestantism by motives with which the understanding had little to do. He used this faculty—the ‘*Essay on Development*’ is a notable instance—to justify conclusions at which he had arrived on other grounds; but once these had been reached his intellect was too restless not to grapple with the problem of assent as a whole. His historical knowledge was limited; he never questioned the ecclesiastical view of Christianity; and he saw rightly that this meant, in the last resort, Rome. But he was conscious of the shortcomings of actual Catholicism. He was not in the strict sense of the word

a scholar, but his tact and ability, which were consummate, told him that not a few of its proofs were inadequate and that not a few of its explanations failed to explain. His aim was to supply a philosophy of religion which, while justifying the Papal Church, should admit a principle of progress, accounting for defects by the presence of a human element and the inevitable discrepancy between the ideal and the actual. The Church, however, showed no disposition to accept his apologetic—at which, in spite of somewhat half-hearted official denials, at least two of the condemnations of the Syllabus of 1907 are directed—and his apologetic fails to cover the concrete Church. In Newman the philosopher and the divine lie side by side unreconciled; the two lines of thought, produce them as we will, do not meet.

These efforts, it has been said, were failures; yet to say no more than this is a half-truth. Lamennais fell away, and his followers were scattered; the Vatican definition passed in spite of Döllinger; Newman lived under a cloud which only lifted when his work was done. But it is the cause, not the individual, that counts. In each case a leaven was deposited which continued to ferment when those who had called it into being were gone. And the past flows into the present; the political, the historical, and the philosophical Liberalisms of yesterday are factors in the Modernism of to-day. What this adds to them is criticism—that is, scientific method—applied to Scripture and Christian origins. The result is the introduction of intelligibility and order into what was previously a confused mass of heterogeneous matter. Critics are open to criticism. ‘*Mes opinions de savant sont révisables indéfiniment.*’¹ But on the broad lines of the position it is safe to prophesy that there will be no retreat. Its strength is that it proposes no view. What it does is to state facts, which, as such, command recognition and are the same for all. And ‘things are what they are.’ However loudly it is proclaimed that two and two make three or five, the fact is unaffected; they remain neither more nor less than four.

¹ Loisy, *Quelques Lettres*, 146.

It is urged that certain conclusions of the critical school are inconsistent with Catholicism, and even with Christianity, and that the war to the knife waged by the Vatican against Modernism is one of faith against unbelief. The argument from consequences is inadmissible. If fact is irreconcilable with dogma, there can be but one end to the conflict; dogma will disappear. But in this case the premiss is at fault. From history, from science, from criticism, religion in its genuine shape has nothing to fear. It is independent of these things. Its seat is in the heart and the conscience; its truths 'are in eternity; and the image of them on earth is not the movement on the surface of the waters, but the depths of the silent sea.' With the images and symbols in which they find expression it is otherwise. There was a time when these were not; there may be a time when they will have ceased to be. What criticism has made impossible is the confusion between the absolute and the relative; 'ce qui est frappé de caducité, c'est une certaine conception du dogme d'infailibilité ecclésiastique et de la révélation.'¹ This conception is not peculiar to Catholicism; it was taken over from the Middle Ages by the Reformed Churches. It survives in them, however, rather as an attitude of mind than as a dogma. Individuals cling to it; but no attempt to enforce it on the community is probable, or could be made with any prospect of success. The Church of Rome, with her rigid organisation, stands on other ground. A society can develop only within certain limits; if these are overstepped it dissolves. Are these limits reached for Catholicism, the *differentia* of which is the fixing and apotheosis of tradition, when its formulas and institutions are regarded as relative? It may well seem so. But it is the unexpected that happens: 'Deux choses sont certaines. Le catholicisme ne peut périr; le catholicisme ne peut rester tel qu'il est. Il est vrai que nous ne concevons pas non plus comment il pourrait changer. Ces heures où toutes les issues semblent barrées sont les grandes heures de la Providence.' Thus wrote Renan a generation ago. When the words were written Pius IX had been succeeded by Leo XIII; now

¹ *Ibid.* 73.

Leo XIII has been succeeded by Pius X. Hopes that might then have been entertained are now obscured ; ' this is your hour, and the hour of darkness.' But the alternative is certain.

Si le catholicisme évoluait dans le sens du progrès scientifique et de l'humanité actuellement civilisée, il est certain que l'établissement catholique avec sa hiérarchie de droit divin, son dogme intangible, ses sacrements magiques, en subirait un déchet considérable. Mais il n'a pas d'autre alternative que de se transformer pour vivre ou de se rétrécir en une secte de plus en plus fermée pour mourir.¹

¹ Loisy, *Quelques Lettres*, 72.

XV. THE ENGLISH CHURCH OF TO-DAY

THE outstanding volumes in the historical series edited by the late Dean Stephens and Dr. Hunt are Canon Capes' 'English Church in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries,' and that in which the Vice-Provost of Eton brings the undertaking to a close. The detachment and expert knowledge of the former writer and the sympathetic insight of the latter would be sufficient, if their contributions stood alone, to justify the conclusion that the work is indispensable to serious students of the history of the English Church.

Mr. Cornish has succeeded in being impartial where impartiality might seem impossible of attainment. Controversy fills so large a place in Church history, and the controversies of the nineteenth century are so near our own time, that when we touch on them, with few exceptions, our speech bewrayeth us. Mr. Cornish is one of the few. It would be difficult from anything that appears in his book to put him down as a member of any party, or to infer his personal views. Nor is impartiality his only qualification for the work of an historian: his writing is consecutive, his portraiture lifelike, and his style clear.

No more important period could have been assigned to him than that which has fallen to his lot. The nineteenth century has witnessed a transformation of the Church of England second in importance only to that brought about by the Reformation. This gave her freedom; that enlargement. In 1800 the English and Irish bishops constituted her hierarchy; to-day this hierarchy numbers 257 Sees. From a national Church, or *Landeskirche*, she has become a communion co-extensive with the British flag and tongue.

To read Mr. Cornish's book is to receive a vivid impression of this enlargement :

We feel that we are greater than we know.

The growth of the Empire was the condition of that of the Church ; but, though the latter began with, it did not end in the work of ministering to our countrymen beyond the seas. The S.P.G., formed with this object, soon extended its operations ; from the first the C.M.S. had direct missionary work in view. The result of this propaganda, and of the wide diffusion of the British race, has been that in every quarter of the globe native as well as colonial Churches, not indeed subject to the Church of England, but united to it by ties of origin and natural piety, have come into existence. The English Church is larger than the Church of England ; it has become—the name is not free from objection, but, for want of a better, we may use it—the Anglican Church. Nor has this growth been one of extension only : material development seldom stands alone. Its religious side has its dangers. To think imperially we must have learned to think sanely—and not all are sane. The position which the See of Canterbury has come to occupy, by no policy or design of its occupants but by sheer force of circumstances, offers certain points of resemblance to that partly, indeed, assumed by, but also to a great extent forced upon, the Papacy in early days. York, historically its equal, has fallen, like Alexandria and Antioch, out of competition ; to the Churches beyond the seas it is little more than St. Davids—the shadow of a once great name. From its greater accessibility, and its closer connexion with the capital and the Court, Canterbury has effectually distanced its northern rival ; nor has the metropolitan authority claimed by certain colonial Churches lessened its prestige. The form taken by this has varied even in our own time, and may vary in future. ‘ A frequent appeal to Archbishop Tait ’—so in 1898 wrote the present Archbishop of Canterbury, whose long connexion with Lambeth gives weight to his words—

from America, from Africa, from the Antipodes, was to this

effect: 'Our Church is not yet strong enough to stand alone. We are still dependent on our link with England, and especially with Lambeth; help us to maintain it till we are stronger.' In Archbishop Benson's Primacy the subsequent stage had everywhere been reached.¹

It cannot, however, be said that the general situation has been affected, though it must be remembered that the authority, if we are to call it so, of the Archbishop is moral, not legal, and that its effective exercise depends to a great extent on his personal weight and character. The fact remains that, while their tendency to independence is marked, the influence of the great Home See has grown with the growth of the colonial Churches, and that in a true sense the Archbishop of Canterbury has become *alterius orbis Papa*.

The position is one which calls for the courage of self-suppression—a courage often greater than that of self-assertion. It would be an anachronism if this natural and legitimate preponderance were to develop into a power of jurisdiction. Its analogy is rather the guidance extended by an Apostle to the first Christian communities than the authority of a Patriarch or Pope. So far there has been little cause for apprehension; the effort has been in the direction of non-intervention. But we may be glad to reflect that the nomination of the Archbishop rests with the Crown, which is for us what popular election, held from the first to be a condition of a lawful episcopate, was for the Early Church. It is probable that in the choice of future Primates practical wisdom will count for more and more, outweighing more brilliant qualities. It is not necessary, it may or may not be desirable, that an Archbishop of Canterbury should be eminent for learning, for eloquence, or even for more than ordinary piety. What is necessary is that he shall be what was called in the sixteenth century a *Politique*; that he shall possess in an exceptional degree what may be described as the uninspired virtues—sobriety, judgment, good sense. He must have learned to be silent when others speak; to hold his hand when others take action; to incur the reproach of timidity and half-heartedness

¹ Cornish, *A History of the English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, ii. 425.

when, were he untrammelled, he would descend into the arena and take his chance with those whose lesser responsibilities leave them free. It was the good fortune of the Church to possess (1856–1883) a bishop who, singularly endowed with the qualities which fit a man for high ecclesiastical position, was enabled by his long tenure of office to impress the note of his strong personality on the Primatial See.

Archbishop Tait was not only the most remarkable prelate that had sat on the throne of Canterbury since the Reformation, but occupied a position in the country at large unlike that of any of his brethren or predecessors for many generations. Tait has been called ‘the Archbishop of the laity.’ He was trusted by the laity as no other bishop was; his temperament and manner of thinking were those of a layman rather than a churchman, and his advice was sought and listened to by public men of all parties. He believed in the connexion of Church and State, and set himself with all his mind to learn the business of a statesman. A statesman requires knowledge of men’s motives and sagacity as to their actions, and the sense of proportion which can distinguish between things which are important and things that seem important. Tait was never carried away by the cry of the moment; he was inclined indeed to think too lightly of it, and to go on his own way without sufficient consideration for the opinion of others. But he saw further than his opponents; and perhaps one reason why he was not always in harmony with the wants of the age was that he despised littleness, and did not make enough allowance for the littlenesses which go to make up the sum of public opinion. He looked for more common sense than the world contains. . . . His idea of the Primacy was that of a universal patriarchate, above and remote from party, as far as possible independent of sectarianism, and he regarded himself as appointed to guide and control the most important and powerful religious body in the kingdom. He did not confound the Church with the clergy, nor ignore the millions who are outside the Church. His impartiality made itself respected, and in the end succeeded, though those whom he would not follow into extreme courses complained of unfairness, and considered him an opportunist, as he was, if

opportunism means making the best of every situation, and dealing with men and parties as they are, not expecting them to be what they are not.¹

The ground for this development had been prepared. The Church of England owes her distinctive features to the fact that the English Reformation was brought about by statesmen, not by theologians. The English mind is not accessible to ideas as such : it was the abuses of the Mediæval Church, not its speculative errors, that alienated the nation—the extortions of the Papacy and the corruption of the priesthood, not the worship of the Virgin or the sacrifice of the Mass. Few were enthusiastic Catholics or Protestants. Those who were paid the price, often a heavy one, of their convictions ; the average man stood between the two. His standpoint was practical. A disputed succession, civil war, the national independence—those things seemed to him more important than the theological questions in dispute. Do not let us put him down either as a sceptic or an Epicurean. He was neither : but his estimate of values was other, and perhaps more discriminating, than ours. And his instinct was prophetic : it was because his mind acted on political and ethical rather than on sectarian lines that the country took its stand for the movement with whose fortunes, the future showed, its greatness and prosperity were so intimately allied. The strength of the Elizabethan statesmen was that they understood and shared this national mind. Their settled purpose was to keep England free from the wars of religion which were devastating the Continent ; and with this end in view they desired to make the nation and the Church co-extensive. The attempt of Henry VIII to retain Catholicism without the Pope had broken down. The logic both of ideas and events was too strong for it, the school of Gardiner drifted inevitably into that of Pole. And it was the impossibility of this alternative that made England Protestant. It would not, at any price, be made a slaughter-house as the Netherlands had been ; cost what it would, it would not put up with

¹ Cornish, *A History of the English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, ii. 347, 348.

the Pope or with Spain. It is probable that till well on into the reign of Elizabeth the majority of Englishmen had a regard, though not a very active regard, for the old religion, and no great love for the new. That the National Church was meant to include such persons is the historical justification of the High Church party; though it was believed that the attitude in question would die out, as in fact it did, with the existing generation; and no one could have anticipated its revival at a distance of three centuries in its modern form. But while for the sake of peace there was a disposition to make concessions to the less advanced section of the community, these concessions were confined to external and indifferent things. The nation would not be deflected by its laggards from the onward course.

The criticism of the Reformation now in vogue resolves itself into two objections: that the Reformers were not saints; and that the Reformation did not do everything, leaving us a perfect Church. With regard to the first the question turns on what is meant by sanctity. The Reformers were not in the least like St. Aloysius Gonzaga, who carried his pious fear of the other sex so far that he would not look at his mother, or St. Benedict Joseph Labre, whose asceticism was such that he not only refused to remove the vermin that infested his clothes and even his person, but replaced them when they fell from him. Such virtues, judge them as we will, are not those of leaders of men. The Reformers compare favourably with the typical figures of the Catholic reaction—a Pius V or even a Charles Borromeo; their parallels must be looked for, not in novitiates and seminaries, but among the robust apostles of the nations, who, when the walls of the Empire were falling about them, subdued its barbarous invaders to the obedience of Christ. In each case the work was done—it may be, roughly; but the thing to remember is that it was done. With regard to the second, it is foolish to look for the atmosphere of the twentieth century in the sixteenth—the ‘Church without spot or wrinkle’ is in heaven, not here. The Reformation did not inaugurate the millennium: what it did was to deal radically with the abuses of the Mediæval

Church, and set religion free to advance upon the lines of human life. It brought Israel out of Egypt ; it was under other guidance that he entered into the promised land.

In England these lines were those of the national temperament and character, conditioned by political events. The qualification is important, because the Englishman is pre-eminently a πολιτικὸν ζῶον, in the modern as well as in the Aristotelian sense of the term. His attitude towards Catholicism was determined by the Marian burnings, the reek of which still haunted Elizabethan England ; towards High Anglicanism, by the Stewart tyranny ; towards the more Radical forms of Protestantism, by the Commonwealth. In each case with substantial justice. He had, and has, no mind to be dictated to by Pope, bishop, or presbyter ; he will have his clergy tame. Had the Reformers had their way, the Church of England would have been modelled on that of Geneva ; the retention of the Episcopate and the liturgy were due to the State. The motive was political, not religious. It was thought inadvisable to alienate the conservatism of the country by unnecessary changes, and advisable to keep a check upon the sectaries, already inclining to sedition, through an order of ecclesiastical middlemen immediately dependent on the Government, as well as by a fixed form of public worship which did not admit of political declamation under the pretext of extempore prayer. The notion of an Apostolical succession in the Reformed hierarchy is of post-Reformation origin. As a fact, nothing took place at the Reformation to break any succession which then existed ; this would have been fatal to the comprehension desired by the Government. Cecil urged upon De Quadra (1561) that the English bishops had been not merely elected by a congregation, but ‘apostolically ordained.’¹ But the contrast was rather between popular and official nomination than between valid and invalid orders : the idea that episcopal ordination was necessary to a true ministry was foreign to the Elizabethan and exceptional among the Caroline divines. Hooker is the first of English theologians ; but his teaching on this point,

¹ J. A. Froude, *History of England*, vi. 482.

as on the Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, is flat heresy to modern Anglicans. His argument for Episcopacy is not that it is necessary, but that it is not unlawful—which no modern Protestant would question; and he speaks of Calvin as ‘incomparably the wisest man that the French Church did ever enjoy, since the hour it enjoyed him.’¹

The temper which is known as Erastianism is inbred in the Church of England. Her most distinctive doctrine is the Royal Supremacy; that the King is ‘in all causes and over all persons, whether ecclesiastical or civil, within these his dominions supreme.’ It calls for no apology.

If we regard the Sovereign as the representative of the State, the declaration that he is supreme over all persons and causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil, may be justly spoken of as one of the corner-stones of the liberties of England. It meant that there should be no escape from submission to the law of the land, and that justice alone and not privilege was to rule the relation which existed between the clergy and the people.²

It is a mistake to suppose that this position bears exclusively, or even peculiarly, on the Established Church. All citizens, Churchmen and Nonconformists alike, are equally subject to the law, which interprets and enforces the contract under which a dissenting minister discharges his functions no less than it does the Acts of Parliament which regulate the status of the clergy of the National Church. In each case circumstances might make disobedience a duty. But such circumstances are, and are likely to remain, exceptional. The conscience of the community as a whole is more to be trusted than that of any particular section of the community; it is less open to class and party interests, it is more accessible to ideas. And the reason why men of the wiser and better sort are predisposed to blame persons who come into conflict with the law under pretext of religion is, not that they violate the law—this might conceivably be justifiable and even imperative—but that ordinarily the law is right and they are wrong. That this

¹ Preface to the *Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*.

² S. R. Gardiner, *History of England*, i. 27.

supremacy is open to abuse and has in fact been abused will not be questioned. The seventeenth century was the century of absolutism: under the half-French Stewarts the Constitution both in Church and State was perverted into an instrument of personal rule. To this we owe the breach between the Church and Dissent, with many injuries to religion to which it has given, and gives, rise. Under their successors the older tradition revived—the government of the Hanoverian Kings, like that of the Tudors, interpreted the mind of the nation. To those who will not be the dupes of words it may well seem that the Crown, whether acting under the advice of its ministers or through the law courts, or through Parliament, is a truer exponent of this mind than an ecclesiastical synod, or than a direct popular vote. The working of the popular vote in Scotland, under more favourable conditions than would be found here, is not such as to encourage us to adopt it; a synod, clerical or mixed, would speak not for national religion but for denominational Anglicanism. The liberty of the Church means too often in the mouths of Churchmen the domination of a party and the crushing of its opponents. Establishment limits autonomy: were it not so, it would be the establishment of a sect—an obvious injustice to the sects that are not established. The Church rests on a broader basis. It is established not because it teaches a particular theology or possesses a particular succession, but because it represents the best judgment and conscience of the community—the working, in philosophical language, of Reason, in religious, of the Spirit, in the community and mankind. When it ceases to do this, when it reflects a sectional mind and a denominational conscience, the sufficient reason for its establishment is gone.

If the Church of the eighteenth century reflected the common sense of the age it also reflected its level surface. Dean Church speaks of its ‘quiet worldliness.’ It must be remembered, however, not only that the amount of work expected of the clergy was less than is the case to-day,^F but that it could not have been otherwise; there was very much less to do. ‘My father was a pluralist,’ Keble used to say;

'and he was not a bad sort of man.' But with the nineteenth century things changed. Manufactures grew ; great towns came into existence ; the population went up by leaps and bounds. The French Revolution affected England both by attraction and repulsion ; the sense of the duties attached to privilege and property was quickened, though it was quickened by fear. The old-fashioned High Churchmen—the majority of the clergy belonged to this school—took life easily. Enthusiasm had died out with the Nonjurors ; the temper of Hanoverian Toryism was flat. The clergy lived like the smaller sort of squires. They were orthodox, but not dogmatic ; they were very much more insular than their predecessors had been ; they looked down on Dissent and detested Rome. Services were infrequent and dreary ; the more fervent religionists were found outside the Establishment. At the beginning of the eighteenth century it was reckoned that one man in twenty-five was a Dissenter ; the proportion in 1800 was estimated at one in four. Now it is even larger ; barely one half of the population belongs even nominally to the National Church. The first sign of revival was the rise of Evangelicalism. The essential note of the Clapham sect was philanthropy. Justification by faith was the cardinal doctrine of its adherents ; but they were before and above all things the party of good works. Sharp, Clarkson, Wilberforce, and, later, Shaftesbury, were men of whom any Church might be proud. The abolition of the slave trade and of slavery, missions, Sunday schools, education, the Factory Acts—this was the field on which their activity displayed itself ; they 'went about doing good.' Laymen led ; the Church followed, sometimes at a distance. Lord Shaftesbury notes that, while rationalists supported him, 'professors' of religion held aloof. It was the age of the great societies—the Church Missionary and the Religious Tract (1799) ; the Bible Society (1804) ; the Church Pastoral Aid (1836). The Tractarians, who as a party have shown from the first an exceptional genius for self-advertisement, have appropriated the credit of the distinctly ecclesiastical revival of the century. As a fact, men of other schools shared in and inaugurated it. Sumner, Coplestone and

Stanley were reforming bishops; at Islington Daniel Wilson instituted early communion and restored weekday services; Simeon's personal piety was that of a saint. The narrowness of the party has been exaggerated. Simeon was no friend to 'systematisers in theology,' believing that the truth lay between Arminian and Calvinist, and that 'pious men of either persuasion approximate very nearly when they are on their knees before God in prayer.' He could see no important difference between the Churches of England and Scotland; and when he was in Scotland he preached and received the sacrament in Presbyterian churches—'where the King *must* pray, his subjects *may*.' But he disapproved of Dissent, thinking that the points at issue between Churchmen and Dissenters were not such as to justify separation. Perhaps he did not always realise to how great an extent separation had been forced on men unwilling to separate; and that it is in the separatist temper, not in the fact of separation, that schism consists.

Then, as now, a better understanding existed between the Churches in the mission field than at home. The C.M.S. and even the S.P.C.K. employed Lutheran catechists; the Jerusalem bishopric (1841) was not an innovation but a development of a previously existing relation between the German and the English Church. Mr. Cornish makes too much of the contrast between the learning of the Tractarians and the intellectual deficiencies of the evangelicals.¹ The latter were less marked than they have been described to be by their theological opponents; the former approximated to that which has been characterised by a poet as 'a dangerous thing.' Common sense is a safer guide than uncritical and uncriticised knowledge. Newman's doctrine of vicarious satisfaction was as crude as Toplady's; and no one who has read it can forget his comment on the massacre of the Canaanites by the invading warriors of Israel.

'Doubtless, as they slew those who suffered for the sins of their fathers, their thoughts turned first to the sin of Adam, and next to that unseen state where all inequalities are righted.'²

¹ *A History of the English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, i. 32.

² *Parochial and Plain Sermons*, iii. 187.

He 'did not so much change his theology,' says an acute writer, 'as surround the citadel of Evangelicalism with fresh doctrinal outworks, such as Baptismal Regeneration, the Real Presence, the possession of supernatural powers by the priesthood, transmitted from the Apostles by ordination, and, as a guarantee for all other doctrines, the extension of authority from the Bible to the Church. Thus he stood further than the Evangelicals from rationalism, and his opposition to reason was more systematic than theirs.'¹

The strength of Evangelicalism was that it appealed to a stock of ideas, limited indeed in number, but efficacious, and, above all, familiar to every Englishman—the future life, retribution, the satisfaction of Christ, and the like. These beliefs were not peculiar to the Reformation theology. It reshaped and strengthened them, but they were taken over by the Reformers from the Mediæval Church. Even in the Middle Ages there was a leaven of what, by an anachronism, we may call Puritanism in Northern Christianity, which contrasted strongly with the residual Paganism which survived, and still survives, in the South. A religious revival, if it is to affect the English mind, must take this as its basis. The reason why the Oxford Movement, with all its attraction for the clergy and the leisured classes, has left the people indifferent is that it either set itself in opposition to Puritanism or worked back from it to mediæval beliefs. Either course was fatal. Puritanism is a foundation to build on, not a starting-point from which to work at pleasure onward or back.

The Whigs of 1832 made Church Reform a leading plank in their platform. Reasonably and necessarily. The revenues of the Church were large, and their distribution was scandalously unequal. One Bishop, his son and son-in-law, received among them more than £30,000 yearly; an archbishop died worth a million, his elder son had £12,000 a year from preferment, his younger son £3000.² Bishop Watson only once visited his diocese. Mr. Cornish tells

¹ A. W. Benn, *History of English Rationalism in the Eighteenth Century*, i. 338.

² Cornish, *A History of the English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, i. 102.

us of a clergyman with two livings worth £1200, who was said to have got the duty of both done by a substitute for £84. The time was one 'when youth, ideas and philosophy contributed freely to legislation.'¹ Abuses connected with Church property combine the maximum of indecorum with the minimum of vested interest; the Ecclesiastical Commission (1835) instituted a radical reform. The clergy naturally resented this; so sound a liberal as Sydney Smith, then a canon of St. Paul's, while advocating the reduction of episcopal incomes, fought vigorously against any encroachment on the property of capitular bodies. The bishops, however, compelled to surrender what had been their own, saw no reason to spare minor offenders. The principle that church benefices are public property held in trust for services rendered was recognised; and from the time of the legislation inaugurated by the Commissioners (1836-1840) neither riches nor inactivity have been notes of the Church. Since then the fall in agricultural rents has caused a still further depreciation of values. The country clergy find themselves overhoused in rectories designed for men of larger incomes than are now common; and it is exceptional to find preferment that can be suitably held by men without private means. In the towns endowments are, for the most part, nominal; under the name of establishment the voluntary system prevails.

It was an irony of fate which placed the Tractarians, with their strenuous asceticism, among the defenders of the worst abuses of the Georgian Church. Whately marked his sense of the incongruity by giving a dinner at which Newman was asked to meet certain Oxford dignitaries chosen from those who were least intellectual and most given to port. It is probable, however, that such influence as the Movement possessed could not have been acquired if its attitude towards 'the mammon of unrighteousness' had been hostile; and High Churchmen were opposed on principle to the claim of the civil power to deal with spiritual matters, under which head they classed the property as well as the doctrine and discipline of the Church. They

¹ W. Cory, *A Guide to Modern English History*, ii. 367.

had little sympathy with Irish Protestantism; but the suppression of ten Irish sees (1883) caused an outcry 'the echoes of which are sounding still.'¹ That religion, or what they conceived to be religion, should be regarded as a matter of indifference seemed to them a greater evil than that it should be actively persecuted. David Lewis, who had been Newman's curate at St. Mary's and followed him to Rome, used to argue seriously that when George IV resisted Catholic Emancipation he had the *grâce d'état*. The history of the Oxford Movement has been told by Dean Church from the standpoint of a discriminating friend;² by M. Thureau-Dangin from that of a somewhat Liberal Roman Catholic,³ and by Mr. J.A. Froude from that of an opponent;⁴ nor should the Abbé Bremond's masterly criticism,⁵ translated under the title of 'The Mystery of Newman,' be overlooked. The key to it, and to the larger political and religious reaction of which it was a part, is that the advance of mankind is spiral. It was a protest against the Revolution, which had terrified the property-holding classes all over Europe; against the aridity of the eighteenth-century tradition, which had outlived itself; and against certain limitations of evangelical pietism, of which the once powerful *Record* newspaper may be taken as a type. Such a protest was far from being uncalled for. Men were looking for something loftier and more spacious: the pity of it was that they looked in the wrong direction, and found a worse, not a better alternative. 'Loss and Gain' gives a vivid picture of the mind of Tractarian Oxford, which presented certain obvious points of contact with that of reformers of the revolutionary type. It was intolerant, and self-assertive to the verge of insolence; it was a one-sided and intemperate revolt against the tradition of the place and time. 'If a man be called either venerable or moderate, distrust him; but, if both, be sure that he is a scoundrel,' said a well-known member of the sect, hearing Archbishop Howley commended for venerableness and

¹ Cornish, *A History of the English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, i. 144.

² *The Oxford Movement*.

³ *La Renaissance Catholique en Angleterre*.

⁴ *The Oxford Counter-Reformation*.

⁵ Translation by H. C. Corrance. Williams and Norgate, 1907.

moderation ; the phrase recalls Luther's boisterous railing against the bishops of his day. Of Newman, who more than any one man embodied the reaction at its best and worst, Mr. Goldwin Smith notes that he was 'always in quest, not of the truth, but of the best system.'¹ This is the key to his career. Rome has system without truth ; Protestantism truth without system ; by a homing instinct he gravitated to Rome. He was a great artist, a consummate advocate, a distinguished man of letters, a master of stately, delicate and impassioned prose. His personality was magnetic ; his sympathy, on his own field, ready, and his insight keen. He was very human. His 'autocentrism,' to borrow M. Bremond's phrase, was phenomenal ; a man of moods and of temperament, he rather inspired than led. His gifts were those of a prophet, not a teacher. He was not learned ; his judgment was defective ; his sense of fact and faculty for dealing with evidence were small :

Tecum habita, et noris quam sit tibi curta supellex.

Mr. Abbott's unsympathetic 'Philomythus'² is indispensable to an estimate either of the movement or the man.

That the unscrupulous attempts made by the Tractarians to dislodge their Evangelical and Liberal opponents from their standing-ground in the Church were unsuccessful was due to that great bulwark of liberty and religion, the Royal Supremacy : the judgments of the Privy Council in the Gorham case and in that of 'Essays and Reviews' saved the Church. Since then 'reculer pour mieux sauter' has been the key to the policy adopted ; every step gained has been made the starting-point for a new advance. The Movement has known how to utilise the most questionable features of modern democracy ; it is backed by a singularly ignorant, a singularly insolent, and a singularly aggressive press. That it has acted as a corrective to the insularity of English religion is true : but it has corrected this defect on one side to accentuate it on the other. It was well that the continuity of the Pre- and the Post-Reformation Church should be exhibited ; and that the unreformed Churches,

Latin and Oriental, should be recognised as true, though corrupt, parts of the Church of Christ. But it was mischievous in the extreme that the ambiguous and uncertain theory of the Apostolical Succession should be emphasised in such a manner as to separate the English Church by a hard-and-fast line from the non-Episcopalian Churches of the Continent—Churches with which so high a churchman as Cosin communicated without scruple, and Ussher did ‘love and venerate as true members of the Church Universal.’ The theory carried to this point is based on sheer ignorance. The belief in the divine right of bishops may be compared to the belief, with which it is so closely allied in English history, in the divine right of kings. Both were possible till it was known how these offices came into being. As long as it was believed that they were directly and immediately of God’s appointment a divinity hedged them. When it became clear that they were historical growths, they took their place in the natural order : like the Sabbath, they were ‘made for man.’ In this country, however, the science of history, and in particular of religious origins, is yet in the rudimentary stage ; and among the clergy the tide sets strongly towards sacerdotalism. The successive Gladstone and Salisbury Ministries, which between them covered more than a generation, broke with tradition by filling the more prominent sees with men of markedly ecclesiastical type. The Rosebery administration promised better things ; but it was shortlived ; and since then the declension has been rapid, the Liberals, for more than one reason, having been the worse of the two parties. Mr. Cornish speaks of the ‘want of counsel and more than Gamaliel-like caution’¹ of the bishops ; their inaction, if not their acquiescence, has played into the extremists’ hands. The result is a wide and increasing gulf between the clerical and the lay mind. The proceedings of Diocesan Conferences and of the House of Laymen must not blind us to this. ‘The laymen who figure in ecclesiastical assemblies do not represent the true lay mind of the Church, still less the lay intelligence of the whole country. They are often

¹ *A History of the English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, ii. 117.

excellent men, given to good works, but they are also usually the partisans of some special clerical school; they are, in short, clergymen under another form rather than the real laity themselves.’¹ How marked is this ‘drift of educated, moral and religious men from membership in the National Church towards an attitude of entire indifference to religion, combined in certain cases with a spirit of hostility and contempt for the clergy and the general policy pursued in matters ecclesiastical, is hardly realised,’ says a thoughtful writer, ‘except by those who have seriously investigated the condition of affairs.’² No feature of the religious situation is more disquieting: the Latin countries show us its effects on religion, on public policy, on family and individual life. Hitherto in England we have been free from it, because we have had one education in which Englishmen have shared, according to their opportunities, without distinction of calling or creed. Now two rival and incompatible systems, the University and the Seminary, or theological college, compete for the training of our religious teachers. The object of the former is to unite, that of the latter to separate. ‘Une formation spéciale et défectueuse crée nécessairement une mentalité particulière et inférieure.’³ An examination of the text-books which form the basis of the instruction given in these establishments explains the failure of the Church to come into contact with the intelligence of the people better than all the discussions that have taken place at the Church Congress or the Lambeth Conference: there can be no greater delusion than to base our hopes for the future of religion on the assumption that the people do not think. They think, often, to better purpose than we do; and what their thought loses in sophistication it gains in strength. A generation ago Froude summed up the position—and his words are truer now than then:

Externally the Ritualists have won the battle. But what a price has the victory cost! The nation has ceased

¹ Stanley, *Essays on Church and State*, p. 276.

² *The Modern Churchman*, April 1911.

³ Loisy, *Autour d'un petit livre*, xxxv.

to care what the clergy say or do. As the Church has become 'Catholic,' the honoured name of Protestant has passed to the Nonconformists. The laity stand aloof, indifferent and contemptuous. The thinking part of it has now a seriousness of its own and a philosophy of its own which has grown and is growing. The clergy magnify their office, but the more they make of themselves the less is their intellectual influence. The great body of the English people, which is Protestant at heart, will never allow their pretensions; and while they are discussing among themselves the nature of their supernatural commission, they are driving science and criticism to ask if there is anything in the world supernatural at all. The storm will die away; agitation is wearisome, and we may subside into a dull acquiescence even in the travesty of ecclesiasticism which is now in possession of the field. But the active mind of the country will less and less concern itself with a system which it despises. A ritualist English Church will be as powerless over the lives of the people as the Roman augurs over the Rome of Cicero and Caesar; and centuries will pass before religion and common sense will again work together with the practical harmony which existed between them in the days of Whately and Arnold and Hare and Sedgwick.¹

The provincialism which is so distinctive a note of English religion is of comparatively late origin. Till the sixteenth century the common relation to the Papacy made Christendom an organic whole; nor did the Reformation isolate us. The intercourse between the English Church and the Reformed Churches was close and frequent; the divines of the Stewart period were familiar with the works of the great Schoolmen and of the Roman Catholic controversialists of their time. After the Revolution the preponderance of Louis XIV and his support of the exiled royal family threw England back upon herself: such theology as existed among us—it was small both in quantity and quality—was insular in the extreme. To this day it remains out of the main stream, and is national, not European. It is not a little mortifying to observe how seldom an English writer is quoted by a Continental theo-

¹ *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, iv. 337.

logian, and to notice that the exception is generally a non-episcopalian author whom we scarcely know by name. The liberalising movement in the Church took, in the first instance, the shape of practical reform. It produced the Ecclesiastical Commission; it dealt with tithes, Church rates, education, and tests. It had links with the past—the old Latitudinarian school lingered in men like Bishop Watson—nor was it separated by any hard-and-fast line from tendencies which could not be described as Liberal. Coleridge and Marsh were among the first to introduce German ideas to English readers; the latter, who had studied at Leipzig, translating (1802) J. D. Michaelis' 'Introduction to the New Testament.' Thirlwall translated Schleiermacher's 'Treatise on St. Luke' (1825), and, in conjunction with Julius Hare, that memorable work, Niebuhr's 'History of Rome' (1828), which, making history a science, gave life and meaning to the past. Milman's 'History of the Jews' marked the birth of a new age of Biblical study.

Its influence on the thought of the time cannot easily be exaggerated. The admission of historical perspective into the field of sacred history had far-reaching and unexpected consequences. Theologians and philosophers may confute each other without interesting many readers outside their own circle: progress in the history of religion and in the knowledge of the Bible is made, not by theologians, but by historians. The advance, whether in truth or error, which has been made during the last century is due to the historical and comparative method of discovering facts in textual, Biblical, and historical science. This movement necessarily came in with the study of physical science and the development of the comparative method. Broad Churchmen and Latitudinarians are those who in every age accept scientific conclusions and endeavour to adapt traditional beliefs to them. Coleridge and Maurice believed themselves to be orthodox and conservative; Milman and Pattison knew that limits could not be set to inquiry, and believed that their duty was to look forward, not back. Such thinkers approach problems of faith from different points of view and in a different spirit; but their paths converge, and the upholder of

Biblical and ecclesiastical authority instinctively knows them for his enemies.¹

This accentuation of facts as distinct from ideas is characteristically English. It may easily become one-sided. It is impossible, indeed, to overestimate the importance of the historical method; Comte's great service to philosophy was to bring it into touch with the concrete. But perception without thought is blind. In vain would we rid ourselves of speculation; a philosophical theory, held consciously or unconsciously, underlies the simplest statement of fact. The history of thought is not thinking. And an exiled king returns a tyrant: the best safeguard against the predominance of theory is that theory should be established in its legitimate place.

Of Arnold Mr. Cornish says truly that, had he lived, 'intellect, honesty and force of character pointed him out as the leader of the reformers'² not only at Oxford but in the Church at large. He was the one man who could have held his own against Newman; and his fundamental conception of the Church as co-extensive with the nation would have cut the ground from under the Oxford Movement, which, under a semblance of Catholicism, was essentially a sect. He saw more clearly and spoke more boldly than those who followed him; his 'Principles of Church Reform' (1833) lays down the lines on which the Church, if she is to remain national and established, must move. Unfortunately his removal to Rugby and his premature death (1842) left the field open to men of a different spirit—with the results that we see.

In spite, however, of the opposition which Liberalism encountered—an opposition which, though the forms that it took were often unworthy, was the expression of genuine religious feeling—the future lay with the Liberals. The intellect and conscience of the country were with them. It was impossible for the more intelligent among the younger men not to be in sympathy with the movement, which moulded the views of many who could not be described

¹ Cornish, *A History of the English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, i. 187.

² *Ibid.*, i. 189.

as Liberals—of scholars like Lightfoot and Westcott of Cambridge, of the authors of 'Lux Mundi': the positions, though, unfortunately, not the temper, of Maurice and Kingsley find general acceptance to-day. Poets like Tennyson and Browning, men of letters like Matthew Arnold and Seeley, exercised a wider influence than professional theologians. Jowett taught Oxford to think; his 'Essay on the Interpretation of Scripture'¹ and the too little read 'Dissertations on St. Paul's Epistles'² made exegesis living, and prepared the way for a scientific theology. Colenso criticised the Mosaic records,³ and his assailants found it easier to denounce the writer than to refute his book. It is probable that the best work of Liberalism is done by way of permeation; it creates an atmosphere in which certain forms of life die out and others thrive. As a school, it has never been, and is never likely to be, popular in the sense in which Evangelicalism and Ritualism have been popular. It is academic, and, to those who are not scholars, a little uninspiring; it makes no appeal to the senses; a certain aridity is perhaps its besetting sin. No one ever lived on negations. A Liberalism, if there be one, which is content to stand at the parting of the ways and to write 'No thoroughfare' on all of them has, and deserves to have, no future: piety and a social programme are conditions of its retaining its hold on men. It lives on, and in virtue of, the Christianity which it expresses; if it ceases to express Christianity, its sufficient reason is gone. And it has the promise of the future because, and in so far as, it expresses Christianity more adequately than its rivals. Its distinctive function is the removal of certain difficulties, moral as well as intellectual, which stand in the way of religion. There is no reason why a Christian as such—particularly an uneducated Christian—should be a Liberal. But Liberalism enables many a man to be a Christian who, but for it, would find Christianity impossible; and supplies that principle of growth without which Christianity would have neither place in nor meaning for a growing world. This is its

¹ *Essays and Reviews*, 1861.

² 1855.

³ *The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua critically examined*, 1862.

justification. Freedom of thought and speech have, no doubt, their drawbacks ; an individual at issue with an institution, civil or religious, seldom appears at his best. Renan contrasts the outspokenness of Colenso with what he calls the 'angelic silences' of many of the Catholic priesthood, who devour their hearts and stifle their convictions in silence. Such silence, is Stanley's comment, may be necessary in the Church of France and Italy. 'But may we be long preserved from it ; for it is the silence of death.'¹

We have been told on high authority that the years immediately before us will be critical for the Church. The settlement of the Education controversy cannot be long delayed ; it will be possible to estimate the success of the efforts now being made to attract the masses ; the Revision of the Prayer Book will have been either taken in hand or definitely abandoned ; the question of Disestablishment may have revived. Most important of all, the Colonial Churches will either have overtaken or been outstripped by the growing population, native born and immigrant, and the work of missions will have either advanced or retreated materially. The age is one of increasing movement ; for Churches, as well as for nations and individuals, the one impossible thing is to stand still. It is easier to state the position than to suggest a policy by which it can be met. The bishops differ among themselves ; the circumstances in which they are placed are difficult ; it is not surprising that, as at the last Lambeth Conference, their official utterances are expressed in general terms. But the drawback to generalities, however unexceptionable, is that they miss the particular issue ; it is in the minor premiss that the gist of the matter lies.

It cannot be said that either the Church or Dissent has shown to advantage in the education controversy. On each side secondary considerations have been made paramount, and the interests both of religion and of education subordinated to those of sect. The denominational question appeals rather to the clergy than to the parents, who, generally speaking, know little about it and care less ; and

¹ *Essays on Church and State*, p. 269.

the principle of neutrality, on which the Government necessarily acts, works inevitably, though by no intention either of the legislature or the executive, in favour of the less dogmatic bodies. Here is the key to the situation. It is not that the Department favours Dissenters, but that Dissenters are, and Churchmen of a certain type are not, satisfied with the only religious instruction which it is in the power of the Department to give. No better advice could have been offered to the clergy and their supporters than that given them by the Archbishop of Canterbury when the last Education Bill was before Parliament; and his opinion, he has told us since, is unchanged. But 'they would none of his counsel'; and the longer the settlement is deferred the less favourable to them it is likely to be. Should the country be driven against its will to fall back upon the secular solution, it will be with the so-called 'Church' party that the responsibility for what we are bold to call that national calamity will rest.

¶ It is probable that the attitude of the masses to religion will not in the long run differ materially from that of the upper and middle classes; the community is one. Nor, however this attitude may shape itself, is it probable that the balance between the Church and Dissent will be greatly disturbed. The democratic government and informal worship of the Free Churches suit one section of the nation; the spacious and historic atmosphere of the Prayer Book another. The difference is one of form rather than of substance; there is no sharp dividing line between what have been called conforming and non-conforming members of the National Church. An increase of occasional conformity—and of occasional nonconformity—is to be desired. It is to be wished that such an interchange of pulpits as exists between the Established and the United Free Churches of Scotland were recognised, and that greater facilities for non-liturgical services were afforded. If, in addition to this, Nonconformists were encouraged to communicate in their parish churches at Easter, the separation would be nominal and the separatist temper near its end. The step in this direction recently taken by the Bishop of

Hereford is one of the happiest signs of the time. Convocation, however, acted with regard to it *more suo* : and the Primate, of whom better things might have been expected, missed a great opportunity by coming down—not, it seems, without hesitation—on the wrong side of the fence. The Bishops are intimidated by the extremists, and hypnotised by the mediæval idea. It is to be regretted that nothing in the shape of a better understanding with the Roman Catholic, or Latin, Church is to be looked for. This is not because of her teaching as such—that of the Oriental Churches, with which a certain *modus vivendi* may possibly be reached, is very similar—but because she has stereotyped herself and so arrested life. The only union which she can admit is that of submission ; and the dead only can join themselves to the dead. A foolish and undignified attempt was made to obtain from Leo XIII a recognition of Anglican Orders, a question which—though it seems impossible to convince Anglicans that it is so—Rome regards from a purely political point of view. The result was the Bull ‘*Apostolicae Curae*’ (1906), in which these Orders were declared ‘*irritas prorsus fuisse et esse, omninoque nullas.*’ Since then the Modernist movement might have brought the English Church into relation with the more progressive elements of Latin Christianity. Its nature, however, was curiously misconceived in this country. High Churchmen imagined that the position was that of a non-papal Catholicism, such as they desire to see taken up by their own Church. When it dawned upon them that it was an effort towards the construction of a scientific theology, and fell into line, not with the so-called Catholic revival, but with the onward sweep of the Reformation and the Illumination, their zeal cooled. In 1907 the bishops might probably have spoken with effect, if not to the English Romanists as a body, at least to the converts, many of whom, taught by experience, look back wistfully to the Church which they have left. A courageous and faithful word, opportunely spoken, might even have found an echo beyond our own shores. But—‘*Episcopi Angliae semper pavidi.*’ They were silent ; the opportunity passed, and will not return.

To the lay mind it seems strange that there should be two opinions with regard to Prayer Book revision. The mind of the twentieth century is not, and cannot be, that of the sixteenth : it is difficult to take seriously the contention that the Athanasian Creed is suitable for public recitation, or that the Lectionary is satisfactory. So with regard to other burning questions. Divorce is an evil ; the question is whether under certain circumstances it is not the lesser of two evils ; marriage with a deceased wife's sister may be undesirable and is unlikely to become general ; but a doctrine of affinity, so rigorous that Roman canonists are driven to escape from it by a legal fiction, prejudices rather than safeguards family life. While as to confessions of faith—and the same may be said of ceremonial—a form, whether of sound words or of observance, is useful only in so far as it is a vehicle of spiritual life. When this runs in other directions, the outworn symbol impedes its course. To take too seriously things not in themselves serious is to lose our sense of proportion, and to become ridiculous ; and in religion, more perhaps than elsewhere, ridicule kills.

There is at present little active agitation against Church Establishments : the question with regard to Wales affects not so much the principle as its application to a particular case. A spark, however, might rekindle the controversy ; and in this case the Liberationists would have not a few Churchmen of the extreme type as allies. No greater misfortune could befall English religion than their success. It is certain that, as things stand, Disestablishment, or, short of this, any loosening of the ties between Church and State, would play into the hands of a party whose ascendancy is already a menace, penalise sober Churchmen, alienate still further the intelligence of the country, and sow the seeds of a religious conflict the end of which it is impossible to foresee. Those Nonconformists—and they are the great majority—with whom national interests count for more than the temporary and fallacious gain of a sect or party, will not, we believe, fall short of the patriotism of their ancestors, who refused in 1688 to purchase exemption from the oppressive disabilities to which they were subject at the risk

of the larger liberties of the nation (in which their own were included), and stood side by side with Churchmen in defence of the fundamental laws of the realm.¹ The battle of Disestablishment, if it comes—it may not and ought not to come—should be fought, not between Churchmen and Dissenters, but between the progressive and the retrograde forces in religion; between the men who look forward and the men who look back. The expansion of the colonial Churches makes the maintenance of the connexion of the Home Church with the State more important. Their hardier climate is unfavourable to religious diletantism; the condition of Christianity striking root in Greater Britain is that it shall be rational, free, and sane.

The *ἡθος* of the English Church is perhaps her finest feature. Quietness is still its note, but the age of 'quiet worldliness' is over; the modern clergy approximate less to the squire type than to that of the parish minister. A shrewd and not over-friendly Roman Catholic observer once commented to the writer on their 'quiet virtue,' which he contrasted with the demeanour and temper of unmarried and seminary-trained priests. Perhaps no influence has been so powerful in the development of this special type of piety as the gracious and delicate verse of the *Christian Year*. A certain want of vigour may seem to go with its quietness: the climate commends itself rather to those who navigate inland waters than to the more adventurous mariners who tempt the high seas. Yet, if such are drawn to stronger remedies, it is possible that experience may show that the old are better; that now, as of old, the 'still small voice' is more penetrating than the earthquake or the fire.

A distinctive mark of the Church of England is that, in an age of advertisement, she does not advertise. Had Hannington and Patteson been Jesuits, the world would have rung with their heroism: the native martyrs of Uganda would have been raised, as deservedly as any of former ages, to the altars of the Church.

They were tortured, their arms were cut off, and they were bound alive to a scaffolding under which a fire was

¹ Macaulay, *History of England*, I, viii.

made, and so they were slowly burned to death. As they hung over the flames, the heathens told them to pray now to Jesus Christ if they thought He could help them. The spirit of the martyrs at once entered into the lads, and together they raised their voices and praised Jesus in the fire, singing till their shrivelled tongues refused to form the words.¹

‘*Salvete flores martyrum !*’ The freshness of the first days is here. The same spirit appears in lesser matters. Does a curate secede to Rome ? it is proclaimed in the newspapers. Does a Roman Catholic or a Dissenter conform to the Church ? no one hears of it ; the result being that a false impression of the situation is given, and that an inaccurate estimate of the relative gains and losses prevails. A sensational Catholic preacher denounces the sins of society, an eclectic Nonconformist propounds a New Theology ; their respective chapels overflow, and descriptive accounts of their proceedings and their personal appearance appear in the halfpenny press.

Non equidem invideo, miror magis.

A scholarly Churchman speaks from a University or Cathedral pulpit, and few hear or heed. He does not call in the reporter, or enlist in the service of religion and learning the arts of the acrobat and the buffoon.

The current laxity with regard to religious observance has, for the time being at least, affected the Established Church more than the Free Churches. No one cause is sufficient to account for the decline of church-going ; though it is probably connected more intimately than with any other with the particular psychology of to-day. In an age of rush people are more easily bored and more intolerant of boredom ; the submission to religious and social convention which led our parents to sit, or sleep, through a two hours’ service is a thing of the past. But the tediousness of the modern pulpit is, in part at least, accountable for the emptiness of the modern pew. The weakest joint in the armour of the English Church is the education of the clergy. The quality of the candidates for Orders has fallen off ; the

¹ Cornish, *A History of the English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, ii. 398.

proportion of honour-men among them is infinitesimal ; too frequently their theological reading before ordination is limited to carefully prepared partisan handbooks, after it to the *Guardian* and the *Church Times*. The natural result follows. The men are zealous, often good organisers, assiduous in their visiting, their parish work and their schools. But their pulpit ministrations are vapid beyond bearing :

Their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw ;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed.

No one who has been accustomed to attend the services of the Presbyterian Church can be surprised that church attendance is better in Scotland than in England, or fail to note the contrast between a learned and unlearned clergy, a living and a dead ministry of the Word. The best English sermons are of the essay type ; preaching, in the sense in which the word is used in Scotland, is seldom heard. With this goes an ostrich-like reluctance and inability to face vital questions. In any but a clerical assembly the discussion on Schweitzer's ' Von Reimarus zu Wrede ' ¹ at the Cambridge Church Congress would have been thought disingenuous ; and it is humiliating to reflect that, for one Anglican clergyman who has read or is capable of estimating the book, there are in all probability ten Nonconformists who have studied it, preached on it, and possess a working knowledge of the literature and the tendencies which it represents. It is to be regretted, it is very greatly to be regretted, that this is so. Ideas by themselves neither constitute religion nor guarantee its future. But to ply Englishmen with cautions against ideas is superfluous. We shall take to ourselves, if we are wise, the warning addressed by a great French scholar to his own Church :

La plus sage des politiques, la plus généreuse sollicitude pour les classes populaires, n'assureraient pas chez nous l'avenir du catholicisme, si le catholicisme, qui, étant une religion, est d'abord une foi, se présentait sous les apparences

¹ Translated under the title of *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. A. and C. Black, 1910.

d'une doctrine et d'une discipline opposées au libre essor de l'esprit humain, déjà minées par la science, isolées et isolantes au milieu du monde qui veut vivre, s'instruire et progresser en tout.¹

'Securus judicat orbis terrarum.' The maxim makes not for the past but for the future ; it opens before us, if we have eyes to discern it, a vision immense, immeasurable—unexplored continents and unsailed seas.

They speak perhaps more truly than they know who tell us that for the English Church the time in which we live is critical ; that she has come to the parting of the ways. The call of Empire is in her ears : she may hear it, and follow ; she may be deaf to it, and refrain. In other words, she may resign herself to the distinctive position of Anglicanism, or she may rise to her higher calling, and take her stand for English Christianity as a whole. In the former case 'Abide ye here with the ass' will be her programme. It is a poor one. She will rest on her past ; she will appeal to the stationary elements of society—the uneducated, the unintelligent, those who for one reason or another stand outside the main stream. She will continue to influence the imagination and sentiment of a section of the nation ; she will probably approximate more and more to mediæval doctrine and ceremonial ; by her claim, disputable as it is, to be (in the sectarian sense of the word) Catholic, she may retain a handful of enthusiasts whose natural gravitation is towards Rome. But this road leads nowhere. A Church which takes it may be long in dying, but is on the road to die. In the other case a great, a very great, destiny awaits her—the furtherance of the religious life of the English people at home and beyond the seas. Her characteristic 'Via Media' is not, and is not likely to become, a middle term between Rome and Protestantism ; the changes that are taking place in Latin Christendom do not look her way. But the 'least reformed' of the Reformed Churches, and inheriting the political genius of the nation to which she owes her distinctive features, she may unite for her own people the best elements of the old order and

¹ Loisy, *Autour d'un petit livre*, xxxv.

of the new. Should it be so, it is not England only that will be the gainer; the 'vasti luminis orae' will receive increase. Her past has been great; her future may be greater. 'The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former; and in this place will I give peace.'

XVI. THE IDEAS OF MRS. HUMPHRY WARD

THE novel falls into one of four classes, as it deals with romance, with life, with ideas, or as, lastly, it takes the shape of a work of art pure and simple. Of the great novelists of the last century, Scott, Thackeray, and George Eliot stand for the first three types. For the fourth we look in vain in that period. Mr. Hardy, who embodies it as to the manner born, is of our own generation; and here the name which at once occurs to us for romance is that of Robert Louis Stevenson, for life that of George Meredith, and for ideas that of Mrs. Humphry Ward. The divisions, of course, overlap; Stevenson was a consummate artist, and Meredith had an instinctive faculty for ideas. But they indicate broadly the point of view occupied by these writers; and, in a large sense, the classification holds.

It would be too much to say that Mrs. Ward is not an artist. 'She is so well educated,' says a recent critic, 'that she knows the proper ingredients for a novel. Picturesque backgrounds are provided; plot is carefully planned; incident does not lack; local colour is thoughtfully wrought up.' But her art is not instinctive. It suggests the collector who knows just what to buy and how to exhibit his collection to the best advantage, but whose motive for collecting lies outside art; or the critic who has made himself master of his subject, and is familiar with the various schools and their representatives, but whose lips are untouched by the sacred fire. If we go a little up stream we shall understand this. Mrs. Ward is the last term of a series. Dr. Arnold was not only a great headmaster, the creator of the modern public school, but a thinker and teacher who, but for his early removal from Oxford and his premature death, would have

exercised as profound an influence on English religion as he did on English education. The author of 'Literature and Dogma' was not only a poet and a man of letters, but a critic who, had he not been in advance of his age, and gifted with a lightness of touch which it viewed with the mistrust of stupidity brought into unaccustomed contact with genius, might have accelerated by a generation the advance of English theology. Mrs. Ward has neither the passion of her grandfather nor the irony of her uncle. But she has inherited the seriousness of the one and the insight of the other; there is an apostolical succession between the three.

Art, it would seem, has come into her life as a side-issue, and acquired no more than quasi-domicile. The Puritan tradition, the introspection, the strenuousness, and above all the marked absence of anything resembling the sensuous in her temperament, have tolerated rather than welcomed the alien guest. Her characters, and in particular her women, are skilfully drawn and often finely coloured. Marcella, Laura, Julie, Eleanor, and above all Catherine Elsmere, are alive. But they do not live for themselves, or because they cannot help living. There is nothing inevitable in them; they are there because they stand for something else—an idea, a moral, an association; they are by-products of thought, not up-wellings of spontaneous life. This is even more markedly the case with her men. Elsmere, Meynell, Raeburn are in the first instance preachers; the message is more than the man.

This point of view, which was that of Wordsworth—'I wish to be considered as a teacher, or as nothing'—needs no apology. It comes naturally to the reflective, as distinct from the merely receptive, temperament. In a fine passage in the preface to 'David Grieve,' contributed to the handsome edition of her collected works, Mrs. Ward explains it.

I am so made that I cannot picture a human being's development without wanting to know the whole, his religion as well as his business, his thoughts as well as his actions. I cannot try to reflect my time without taking account of forces which are at least as real and living as

any other forces, and have at least as much to do with the drama of human existence about me. 'The two great forming agencies of the world's history have been the religious and the economic,' says Professor Marshall. Everyone will agree that in his own way the novelist may handle the 'economic.' By and by we shall all agree that in his own way he may handle the 'religious.' For every artist, of whatever type, there is one inexorable law. Your 'criticism of life' must be fashioned under the conditions of imaginative truth and imaginative beauty. If you, being a novelist, make a dull story, not all the religious argument in the world will or should save you. For your business is to make a novel, not a pamphlet, a reflection of human life, and not merely a record of intellectual conception. But under these conditions everything is open—try what you will—and the response of your fellows, and that only, will decide your success.¹

This response has been in her favour; it was rapid, decisive, and it has been sustained. As applied to the things of mind the commercial test is open to criticism; but, on its own ground, it cannot be gainsaid. The sale of 'Robert Elsmere,' the writer's most characteristic work, has reached, she tells us, little short of a million; 'two years ago 50,000 copies of a new cheap edition were sold in a fortnight, and 100,000 within the year.' The circulation of the later works is steady. They rank among the classics of our generation; few living authors have been so successful in leading people to think, in avoiding the temper of political and religious party, and in getting below the surface of things. It is much to have done this; it is much, also, to have raised the *roman à thèse* to a higher level, and so created a standard by which later writers will be tried. Mrs. Ward has taught seriously, greatly, and successfully; she has left her mark on the thought even more than on the literature of her age.

Her style, at times, reaches distinction. The sense of landscape is, perhaps, readier than the instinct for human nature, though it is not without an element of artificiality.

¹ *David Grieve*, vol. i. p. xxi.

The scenery of Cumberland and Westmorland—not Scotland; this is of another order—is that of her predilection; but the southern counties have not failed to impress her with their more varied charm. The pictures in ‘*Marcella*’ could only have been seen with a discerning eye and painted by a skilful hand.

They had reached the brow of a little rising ground. Just below them, beyond a stubble-field in which there were a few bent forms of gleaners, lay the small scattered village, hardly seen amid its trees, the curls of its blue smoke ascending steadily on this calm September morning against a great belt of distant beechwood which begirt the hamlet and the common along which it lay. The stubble-field was a feast of shade and tint, of apricots and golds shot with the subtlest purples and browns; the flame of the wild-cherry leaf, and the deeper crimson of the haws, made every hedge a wonder; the apples gleamed in the cottage gardens; and a cloudless sun poured down on field and hedge, and on the half-hidden medley of tiled roofs, sharp gables, and jutting dormers which made the village.¹

The same may be said of a vivid impression of night in a later chapter.

To-night, too, the blinds were up, and the great view drawn in black and pearl, streaked with white mists in the ground hollows and overarched by a wide sky holding a haloed moon, lay spread before the windows. On a clear night Aldous felt himself stifled by blinds and curtains, and would often sit late, reading and writing, with a lamp so screened that it threw light upon his book or paper, while not interfering with the full range of his eye on the night-world without. He secretly believed that human beings see far too little of the night, and so lose a host of august or beautiful impressions, which might be honestly theirs if they pleased, without borrowing or stealing from anybody, poet or painter.²

In spite, however, of such descriptions, of which many as finely drawn might be quoted, it is not as works of art that we should class Mrs. Ward’s writings; she is, as has

¹ *Marcella*, i. 61.

² *Ibid.* p. 99.

been said, a novelist of ideas. 'Tell him I leave him my ideas—the easier ones,' was the last message of Arminius to the author of 'Friendship's Garland.' Mrs. Ward has, perhaps, inherited the less easy. Her themes are serious; she has taken them seriously; and that a discussion of ideas conducted on this high level should have appealed to so large a circle of readers is creditable not only to her but to them. A certain tendency to idealise is noticeable. The novels of public life, in particular, introduce us to a society in which distinguished personages literally jostle one another in Belgravian drawing-rooms or in historical country houses; never since 'Lothair' have so many celebrities been 'all with one accord in one place.' Their culture is equal to their surroundings: 'Tis from high life high characters are drawn.' They are less fantastic than Lord Beaconsfield's creations. They fit their canvas; they say what should be said, and do what should be done. But there is a certain suggestion of the Scottish dowager who thanked heaven that 'the names of her friends, with few exceptions, were written in the Peerage and in the Book of Life.' There is, possibly, a section of society which corresponds to Mrs. Ward's picture. There is certainly a much larger section, not wholly composed of worthless people, which does not.

The distinctive note of her thinking is sanity. She is progressive, but distrustful of Liberalism; a feminist, but an opponent of women's suffrage; a Modernist, but in her latest utterance, 'Richard Meynell,' an upholder of the Established Church. It is something, since this is so, to have escaped dullness; the perfectly same thinker pays, so often, for his sanity by being also perfectly dull. Mrs. Ward, didactic as she can be, is an exception; her criticism of ideas is solid without being heavy, and appeals to those whose minds move on other lines than hers. The discussion of Socialism in 'Marcella' is an example.

Socialism seems to me, like all other interesting and important things, destined to help something else! Christianity begins with the poor and division of goods—it becomes the great bulwark of property and the feudal State.

The Crusades, they set out to recover the tomb of the Lord—what they did was to increase trade and knowledge. And so with Socialism. It talks of a new order—what it *will* do is to help to make the old sound.¹

This is as just as it is acute. But—must it not be added?—if this be so, Socialism, like wisdom, is ‘justified of all her children’; and we need not quarrel with the dictum of a genial politician—the late Sir William Harcourt—that ‘we are all Socialists now.’

Somehow, however, the impression left by the political novels is that of one with whom the world has gone well; so well as, not indeed to repress sympathy with the less favoured—of this there is evidence on every page—but to inspire the conviction that the existing social order is absolute and beyond discussion.

Property to him means self-realisation; and the abuse of property was no more just ground for a crusade which logically aimed at doing away with it than the abuse of other human powers or instincts would make it reasonable to try and do away with—say—love, or religion.

Socialism, as he read it, despised and decried freedom, and placed the good of man wholly in certain exterior conditions.

I don’t so much want to take from them and to give to the others. I only want to be sure that the beauty, and the leisure, and the freshness are *somewhere*—not lost out of the world.

Never, *never*, be ashamed merely of being rich—of living with beautiful things, and having time to enjoy them! One might as well be ashamed of being strong rather than a cripple, or having two eyes rather than one.²

Well, property is a form, though not the highest form, of self-realisation; and the Socialist State, were it to become actual, might not improbably come into conflict with individual freedom, though freedom does not consist in doing what you please. Millionairism is as mischievous to millionaires as it is to society; but few will contend that the possession of property is, in itself, a thing of which

¹ *Marcella*, ii. 114.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 175, 177, 213, 214.

to be ashamed. And, human nature being what it is, there is not much fear of these considerations being overlooked. The Franciscan idea sets up a standard by which they may be and (some of us think) should be balanced. But they have their weight, and this weight is considerable ; no one formula exhausts the truth of things.

Mrs. Ward's contention that social and economic questions should be treated on non-party lines is now generally admitted to be reasonable. Must it not also be recognised that labour unrest, emphasise its evils as we will, is a sign of growth ? It is not most prevalent where the pinch of poverty is sharpest. One of its conditions is a certain intelligence and power of reflection in those affected ; and this presupposes a material standard above the lowest. In 1789 there was less misery among the French than the German peasantry. But the former had become articulate—hence the Revolution ; the latter were dumb. The central feature of the situation by which we are faced to-day is not so much the problem of poverty in itself as the increasing perception of the fact that the only sufficient reason for the permanence of the actual, or any conceivable, social order is that it is believed, not indeed to be faultless, but to work more effectually than any other by which we could replace it for the good of the community at large. Where this belief is weakened, the social order is imperilled. If it were destroyed, the social order would last not a week ; its foundation would be gone. During the last fifty years this belief, with regard to the system under which we live, has been shaken. The proof of this is the amount of apologetic on the subject which is current, and of which ' Marcella ' is a type. As religious apologetic indicates religious insecurity, so social apologetic indicates social insecurity ; people do not apologise for what is unhesitatingly received. This consideration rules out of court the common objection to social reconstruction, that it is revolutionary. The question is, Is it on the lines of the general human movement ? The most complete, because the most inevitable, revolutions are those which are brought about by this movement, and are in the nature of things.

Mrs. Ward's fear of Socialism, while useful as a corrective, has a tendency (it may seem) to become excessive. Society, in the first place, is not identical with the existing social order. It was before this order was, and will remain when this order has passed away. For, firstly, it is founded not on this or that social or economic order, but on human nature and the laws of things. And, in the second place, the influence of Socialism in this country is unlikely to be lasting. Socialism is a plant of foreign growth, and presupposes conditions not commonly met with among us. It is based on ideas rather than on experience; and ideas flourish in a lighter soil than ours. There is something practical, perhaps even prosaic, about English thinking. Facts, or what we take to be such, influence us much, theories little. We were pragmatists before pragmatism; our first question with regard either to a belief or an institution is not, What can be said for or against it? but, How does it work? Such Socialism as we have is academic, not popular. Where it is found in the ranks of labour it is an afterthought—a way of accounting for certain pressure, with the disappearance of which it will disappear. Nor, even where it is a greater power than it is or is likely to become in this country, is the Socialism of to-day that which Mrs. Ward has in view. The theoretical Socialism of the last century, says a well-informed writer,

provided an apparently materialistic and rationalist, but, in truth, largely idealistic and often highly irrational vent for the needs and aspirations of the modern German soul. Born of Hegel, and fashioned by the two Hebrew Apostles, Marx and Lassalle, [it] contained sufficient elements of semi-philosophical mysticism to entitle it to rank as a cult—a cult in which 'other-worldliness' was replaced by perfervid faith in a miraculous, albeit mundane, 'Future State.' But into Socialist, as into Catholic and Lutheran orthodoxy, 'Modernism' has crept. Belief in the transformation of the capitalistic universe by a revolutionary miracle that should at one stroke abolish riches and misery, vice and wrong, has gradually been undermined by critical exegesis and by a doctrine of relativity known as 'Revisionism,' upon whose impious heels 'Nationalism,' as distinct from

the old uncompromising 'Internationalism,' is now pressing hard.¹

In Germany, the Mecca of the sect, the Socialists disclaim the wish to destroy the Empire, and profess to be 'a Nationalist party in the best sense of the term.' If this changes the character of Socialism, it also changes the case against it, and the controversy must be revised.

The Liberal Party, as such, comes off badly at Mrs. Ward's hands. There is, it seems, an occult connexion between it and want of principle. Wharton and Marsham are examples; neither could be trusted round the corner with a shilling. Her virtuous and enlightened magnates have Liberal, even Radical or semi-Socialist, leanings; they are weak on the Game Laws, and strong on Factory Legislation; their souls are troubled, at intervals, by the contrast between St. James's Square and Bethnal Green. But the Liberal party is for them what the Hussite doctrine was for the Reformation; as Duke George put it to Luther at Leipzig—'Das walt; die Sucht'—'God help us! the plague.' Law and order are paramount; the mystical view of the death penalty in 'Marcella'²—'I believe that, if the murderer saw things as they truly are, he would himself *claim* his own death, as his best chance, in this mysterious universe, of self-recovery'—might have come straight out of Joseph de Maistre. For him the priest and the executioner were the twin pillars of the social fabric and the aboriginal representatives of the Deity. For us the executioner, at least, is a survival—for whom the most that can be urged is that, till reason comes of age, force, in one shape or another, must act as regent and govern in her name. So, too, Tressady's conclusion, 'Government to the competent, *not* to the many,' is open to the objection that the two are neither necessarily nor always contraries. Mob-law and Labour tyranny are undoubtedly dangers against which society does well to guard. But the worst evils of both may be incurred under a Government which depends for support upon a combination of disparate and conflicting interests. And the tyranny of finance is a more

¹ *The Times*, January 9, 1912.

² i. 434.

actual danger than either. It is at once more ubiquitous, more insidious, and more difficult either to shake off or to control.

Mrs. Ward's philosophy of religion is likely to be of more permanent value than her contribution to political and economic science. The latter is of the nature of an *Interims-Ethik*; the former has a value for its own sake. On the one side, it is a weapon against the most hateful of all tyrannies, namely (as she says), 'tyrannies and cruelties in the name of Christ'; on the other, it is mediating and constructive; it destroys to rebuild. On the old site, now cumbered with the débris of falling creeds and departing standards, a new Jerusalem, fairer and more enduring than the old, will rise.

Arnold of Rugby has seldom been estimated at anything like his real value. He was a prophet. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that he saw more truly and spoke more boldly than any English Churchman since the Reformation. The non-committal attitude, characteristic of so much Anglican theology, was foreign to him; he would neither fence nor hedge nor trim. By temperament and conviction he was the irreconcilable opponent of the Oxford Movement; its casuistry jarred on his sense of truth. Had he remained at Oxford he might have been another and a greater Newman: 'a greater scholar, as great a preacher, as imposing a personality, with convictions equally assured and impact equally forcible, he would have formed a rival camp.'¹ It was not to be. The Church went down into the trough of the great wave in whose backwash she is still drifting, with broken spars and rent canvas. Calmer seas, it may be, lie before her; but a belt of troubled water remains to be crossed before they are attained.

Matthew Arnold was cast in another mould. He was without his father's intensity, but he inherited his literary instinct; the one made Rome, the other made Israel, live. The first English critic of his time, his criticism was a song before sunrise; the old order was extinct, the new unborn. His contemporaries never quite understood him. They were

¹ Tuckwell, *Pretractarian Oxford*, p. 121.

practical party men, writing up their own side, writing down the other—fairly, no doubt, and in accordance with the rules of the game. But the practical temper has its limitations. ‘Only think of all the nonsense which you now hold quite firmly, but which you would never have held if you had not been contradicting your adversary in it all these years.’¹ Neither father nor son adopted the ecclesiastical standpoint; yet, were a man asked to state the genuine position of the English Church, he might do worse than refer the inquirer to the Arnolds. For the father the Church was nothing less than the nation viewed from the standpoint of religion; the son criticised, with what was perhaps to some an unwelcome candour, the reasons given by Dissenters for their refusal to conform. The type of Dissent which he had in view is a thing of the past; and the Church of to-day is less in touch with the general mind than was the case a generation back. Whatever the reason, the non-episcopalian churches seem, at least for the time being, more successful in dealing with ideas than the episcopalian; a Scottish congregation would make short work of such preaching as is acquiesced in by the average English churchgoer. But, historically, the National Church has been more spacious than the so-called Free Churches; it has stood for a larger tradition and diffused a sunnier air. It was Matthew Arnold’s distinction to have seen this, and, by his insistence upon it, to have recalled attention from the fact to the idea. To understand Mrs. Ward it is well to bear in mind her heredity. Of a later generation, her knowledge in certain fields is greater than that of Dr. Arnold; of a naturally graver temperament, her seriousness of purpose is, if not more real, at least more obvious than that of his distinguished son. But she owes much to each, and has carried on the work to which they addressed themselves; ‘Quasi cursores vitæ lampada tradunt’ holds of all three.

The inception of ‘Robert Elsmere’ was due to a Bampton Lecture given in 1881 by a then prominent High Churchman—the late Bishop John Wordsworth—on the connexion

¹ *Culture and Anarchy*, p. xxviii.

between unbelief and sin. The lives of believers are, unfortunately, sufficient evidence that the lecturer's thesis, as Mrs. Ward understood it, was at least not an exhaustive account of the matter. 'Iliacos intra muros peccatur et extra': to live irregularly, it is not necessary to disbelieve. The association of ideas rang false.

Is this all that a religious teacher at the centre of English intellectual activity, whose business it is to make a study of religious thought and of the religious life in man, can tell us about that great movement of the human mind against the traditional Christian theology, which is to many of us the most important fact of our day and age? Does he see no further, does he understand no more than this?¹

The object of the book was to place the question of the divergence between the traditional and the scientific in theology on its true ground. The Pauline distinction between the 'natural' (*ψυχικός*) and the 'spiritual' (*πνευματικός*) man is of importance in this connexion.² There are certain antinomies, God and the World, Good and Evil, Life and Death, &c., which remain unsolved for us, not because they are in themselves insoluble—this would be an assumption—but because our minds are so constituted that the understanding cannot come into touch with them; it seems to be grappling with air. Were the intellectual solution, then, the only one possible, we could not get beyond an admission of ignorance—'I do not know.' The practical, however, comes to the aid of the pure reason—so it is held by an important school of thinkers; we are enabled to meet the difficulty, not indeed by the logical understanding taken separately, but by the knowing faculty (of which it is only a part) as a whole. Here learning has no prerogative. Knowledge of the central truths is not a matter of scholarship, but of the spiritual faculty which St. Paul calls faith. But when religion passes over into theology, and this is made to cover what are called 'dogmatic facts,' it is impossible to withdraw these developments from the province of science or to exempt them from its tests. A Christian poet tells us of truths

¹ *Robert Elsmere*, Introduction, p. xxvi.

² 1 Cor. ii, 10-15.

which 'sages would have died to learn, Now taught by cottage dames.' But these truths cannot include the Synoptic problem, or the history of Christian ideas and institutions. Here we must have recourse to scholarship ; and the decision must rest with those who know. In 'Robert Elsmere' Mrs. Ward has brought this into clear relief. The task that lies before the inquirer is, she urges, in the last resort, the analysis of testimony—its various values, degrees and kinds. This

'makes almost the chief interest of history. History depends on testimony. What is the nature and the value of testimony at given times ? In other words, did the man of the third century understand, or report, or interpret facts in the same way as the man of the sixteenth or the nineteenth ? And, if not, what are the differences, and what are the deductions to be made from them, if any ?'

'It is enormously important, I grant—enormously.'

'I should think it is,' said Langham to himself, as he rose ; 'the whole of orthodox Christianity is in it, for instance.'¹

A generation has passed. It is not now argued, at least by Bampton Lecturers, that Liberal theology connotes vice and Conservative theology virtue ; nor is it denied that criticism has revised what were formerly looked upon as 'dogmatic facts,' and changed the perspective in which they present themselves to us. 'Robert Elsmere' has counted in this result ; Mrs. Ward's service to religion—and it was one of the first importance—was to have estimated rightly the *moral* values at issue. Whether this or that event took place or not is a matter not of moral but of historical interest ; but, when belief in a doubtful or unhistorical event is imposed upon the conscience, the question becomes moral.

God is not wisely trusted when declared unintelligible.

Such honour rooted in dishonour stands ; such faith unfaithful makes us falsely true.

God is for ever reason ; and His communication, His Revelation, is reason.²

¹ *Robert Elsmere*, i. 358.

² *Ibid.* ii. 65.

We may not, the Greek philosopher reminds us, predicate what is shameful of the Deity; and 'Doth God' (asks the prophet) 'need your lie?' These axioms give us the space and freedom needed for movement. We could not do with less; we need not ask for more.

The practical conclusion of the book is more open to question. In 'Richard Meynell' another solution is proposed for our own time; but it is simply not the case that scholarly Churchmen of the eighties either had to, or did, 'depart and go into exile.'¹ The date of the Book of Daniel is too slender a foundation to bear such a superstructure; nor can it be admitted for a moment that 'a congregation has both a moral and a legal right to demand an implicit belief'² from its minister in a particular interpretation of a particular Scripture narrative. In the Church of England no such right is vested either in a particular congregation, or in a diocesan conference, or in Convocation, even if the House of Laymen be thrown in. The legal right is for the law—that is, the King in Council; the moral for the conscience of the community at large, not that of any section of it, clerical, lay, or mixed, to decide.

Nor can we think, with Mrs. Ward, that Liberal theology occupies a stronger position in the Church now than when 'Robert Elsmere' was written. A comparison, from this point of view, between the Churchmanship of to-day and that of the eighties does not work out wholly to the advantage of that of to-day. The temper of the Victorian Church was, not indeed absolutely, but relatively larger than that of our own time. Tait and Thirlwall were the most prominent bishops of their generation; the influence of such scholars as Jowett and Stanley was widely felt. Among the laity there were fewer who made a hobby of ecclesiasticism, but there were also fewer who were indifferent; religion was stronger both as a personal conviction and as a social convention than now. The particular questions before our generation were, as yet, below the horizon; they had not reached the general mind.

¹ I xxvi.

² ii. 47, 107.

But the sectarian standpoint, now taken for granted, was exceptional. The Bible meant more than the Church, and reason more than authority, though the one was unscientifically interpreted and the other inadequately conceived. Enlargement of view has been accompanied by narrowing of spirit.

To those who regard the Church as National first and Anglican second, the outlook to-day is not without features which inspire misgiving. The constitution of the English Church is, fortunately, such that it is impossible for her to commit herself by a binding decision in any subject-matter. That great safeguard of liberty and religion, the Royal Supremacy, preserves her from this danger; it ties the hands of her clergy, if it does not bridle their tongues. But the forces which produced the Oxford Movement, however negligible in the world of thought, have not ceased to be strong on their own ground—in the Church, and in public affairs where these touch the Church. Here they have never been so powerful as now. The great weight of lay opinion, inside as well as outside the Church, is against them. But this opinion is inarticulate. The minority is clamorous and insistent; and the official machinery is in its hands. It is natural, therefore, human nature being what it is, that it should have the ear of the episcopate—on whose ‘more than Gamaliel-like caution’ the latest historian of the English Church comments¹—and of ministries, more particularly of ministries which rest on an equilibrium of interests. Such a ministry is unwilling to alienate possible support or to provoke avoidable friction. In secondary matters it follows the line of least resistance; ‘the violent bear it away.’

The Nonconformists are opposed on principle to Establishment. For them the Church is a denomination; and they are prepared to deal with it on the basis of Voluntarism. Meanwhile they and theirs throw sops to Cerberus; Liberal politicians have played of late years even more than their opponents into the hands of the High Anglican school. They see, for they are shrewd

¹ F. Warre Cornish, *The English Church in the Nineteenth Century*, ii. 17.

observers, that this means Disestablishment in the near future. What they do not seem to see is the blow that Disestablishment, brought about in this way, would be to Protestantism and rational religion at home and abroad. 'Hoc Ithacus velit.' The residuary legatee of the English Church is Catholicism, and, in the long run, the logical and inevitable embodiment of Catholicism—the Church of Rome. Were the nation moving in this direction, time and the growth of knowledge would be the only remedies. The paradox of the present position is that a marked revival of Protestantism in religion and thought should synchronise with the acute mediævalising of what is historically the foremost of the Protestant Churches. The most disquieting features of the process are, probably, the deliberate attempt to establish a separate spiritual jurisdiction, and the disposition in certain quarters to bring personal and private pressure to bear upon the solution of questions which the law has not decided, and which it is thought undesirable that the law should be called upon to decide. The remedy lies with those whose civil and religious rights are threatened. 'The courts are open, and there are deputies; let them implead.'

'Helbeck of Bannisdale,' perhaps Mrs. Ward's finest book, and 'Eleanor' describe Catholicism in England and in Italy respectively. The record of the old English Catholics as a body is an honourable one. In the sixteenth century they were made, as the French Catholics have been in the twentieth, the scapegoat of Christendom; their interests were sacrificed to the intrigues of party and to the policy of Rome. The loss was not material only. It was hard, as in the case taken by Mrs. Ward, to see the acres diminish and the family fortunes decline. It was harder still to feel the impoverished blood, the decaying energy, the position won in the past slipping away.

What was it that so gripped the mind in the story of this Catholic family? Surely not their strength, but their weakness. . . . It was their passivity, so to speak—their lying at the mercy both of the militant intriguing Catholicism

which used and exploited them, and of the militant Protestantism which made them suffer ; it was this which touched us.¹

Much was lost in the process—taste, temper, education, the arts and refinements of life. But much was retained and intensified—loyalty to what was believed to be truth, a certain fragrance of devotion, and an unconquerable will. The feature of the book that is most true to life is the equilibrium maintained between the loss and the gain. Not all Helbeck's nobility of temperament saved him from certain obvious and displeasing weaknesses, which 'revealed a new element in his character, something small and ugly, that was like the speck in a fine fruit, or, rather, like the disclosure of an angry sore beneath an outward health and strength.' The feud between the Church and criticism is of long standing. But it is pleasant to know that there were Catholics who did justice both to the intention and the execution of the book.

While Father Clarke, in the *Nineteenth Century*, was hotly and bitterly attacking the book as unjust to Catholic faith and practice, my father, the most devout and obedient of Catholics, wrote to me—'This, I think, should gratify you. A Dublin priest whom we really know to be a good man, and a man of some culture, called a day or two ago. He said that he had just finished 'Helbeck,' and had read it with very great interest and admiration. What touched him was the beauty of Laura's character, 'the atmosphere of absolute purity and moral goodness' in which she lives and moves, and the compatibility of which with the 'Everlasting No,' which her intellect had embraced, he had before doubted.'²

'Eleanor' introduces us to a Catholicism of a very different type. The scale on which the Church exists and acts is larger than that of any other religious society. In England even, side by side with the dignified and austere Catholicism of 'Helbeck,' we have that of 'Casting of Nets'; in Italy we have the officialism of the Curia, 'Obey, my friend, obey! There is no more to be said';

¹ *Helbeck*, Pref. pp. xiii., xiv.

² *Ibid.* Pref. p. xviii.

the *à peu près* of Mme. Variani, and the cynicism of the *rétrograde éclairé*, represented by Manisty, but commoner in than outside the Church.

‘Is that fair?—to stand outside slavery—and praise it?’

‘Why not?—if it suits my purpose.’¹

The distinctive note of clericalism, as a party, is here. For its programme and methods M. Laberthonnière’s ‘Positivisme et Catholicisme’ may be referred to. By anyone who would estimate the religion of the Latin countries the position, paradoxical as it seems, must be taken into account.

In ‘Eleanor’ the Modernist controversy meets us. Father Benecke, like so many scholarly priests, is suspended and deprived of the sacraments for saying ‘what every educated man in Europe knows to be true.’² A conflict of this nature is bound to arise when a religion of feeling passes out of its original shape and becomes, over and above this, a religion of ideas. For the first ideas with which it associates itself will be rudimentary, and will at the same time have a tendency to become stereotyped, because a certain fixity is a condition of their apprehension by the popular mind. The further this stereotyping process has been carried, the more acute is the conflict between the old and the new. So long as a Church has not withdrawn herself from the stream of life, ‘*solvitur ambulando*’ is a fair answer. Facts are more than theories. The Westminster Confession, to take an example, is uncompromising; but the Churches of the Westminster Confession interpret it, pass Declaratory Acts, and live. But the constitution, the formulas, and (what is more important than either) the genius or law of the Roman Church exclude such solutions, and tie her to her past. And this ‘*in sensu praeteriti*’; the logic of the system is too closely knit to admit of accommodation; it is ‘all or nothing’; ‘either—or.’ The fallibility of the Infallible may be demonstrated, but the demonstration is inadmissible. For the Church the Pope

¹ *Eleanor*, p. 158.

² p. 389.

remains infallible ; hence a deadlock. Lord Acton puts it forcibly.

It has never been my fortune to meet with an esoteric Ultramontane. I mean, putting aside the ignorant mass and those who are incapable of reasoning, that I do not know of a religious and educated Catholic who really believes that the See of Rome is a safe guide to salvation. . . . In short, I do not believe there are Catholics who, sincerely and intelligently, believe that Rome is right and that Döllinger is wrong.¹

When the distinction between exoteric and esoteric is pressed to this point, the notion of unity, which lies at the heart of Catholicism, disappears. The weakness of Modernism, in many respects so characteristic a product of the modern mind, is its refusal to face this fact. The attempt to evade it gives a certain impression of insincerity, an impression which the all but universal acceptance of the anti-Modernist oath by persons whose opinions are notorious has done much to confirm. There are exceptions. Benecke, like Father Tyrrell, was true to conscience. But what a price !

‘ You see a man dying of hunger and thirst ! He cannot cheat himself with fine words. He starves ! ’

She stared at him, startled—partly understanding.

‘ For forty-two years,’ he said, in a low pathetic voice, ‘ have I received my Lord—day after day—without a break. And now they have taken Him away—and I know not where they have laid Him.’²

Superficial solutions of the difficulty have been offered.

‘ The North will never understand the South—never ! You can’t understand our *à peu près*. You think Catholicism is a tyranny, and we must either let the priests oppress us or throw everything overboard. But it is nothing of the kind. We take what we want of it, and leave the rest. But you !—if you come over to us, that is another matter ! You have to swallow it all. You must begin even with Adam and Eve ! ’³

This view of the matter is found at times in unexpected

¹ *Letters of Lord Acton to Mary Gladstone*, p. lv.

² *Eleanor*, p. 389.

³ *Ibid.* p. 307.

quarters. There is a current seminary story to the effect that two priests, who had been in the habit of discussing theological questions, agreed that the first to die should, if possible, return to give his friend the benefit of his enlarged outlook. He appeared, telling the other to put his questions shortly, as he could not stay long. 'Quid de moribus?' 'Taliter qualiter,' was the answer. 'Quid de dogmatibus?' 'Omnino aliter,' he replied emphatically, and disappeared. It is a timely corrective to over-certainty. But it suggests Bishop Blougram rather than St. Paul. The second distinction will not take us very far. The standards of the Church are the same for all. They may be enforced more rigorously on priests than on laymen, and taken more literally by converts than by born Catholics. But a belief which rests on the loose thinking and indifference of its adherents is in an evil way. Nor will a popular policy, were such to be adopted—and under the present Pontificate the tide sets strongly in the other direction—save the situation: ideas must be met by ideas.

'Richard Meynell' is a romance of Anglican Liberalism. It is of the nature of a prophecy; and prophecy is moulded by the personality of the prophet. In the 'Dawn of All' a popular Roman Catholic writer has sketched the future of the world as Catholics, presumably, wish to see it. There is little in common between this work and 'Richard Meynell.' But it is probable that in each case the writer has seen what he was desirous of seeing; the vision goes beyond what is warranted by the facts. Whatever may be the case with the large outlines, it is doubtful whether the details of Mrs. Ward's ideal reconstruction of the English Church will commend themselves to Liberal Churchmen, or at least to such of them as possess the historical sense. The question of Prayer-book revision is urgent—how urgent those who have practical experience of the existing services know. But the wise architect retains as far as possible the distinctive features of the old structure. This was the principle on which the compilers of the liturgy proceeded; it is the principle, it may be hoped, on which its revisers will proceed. Mrs. Ward's description of the new service

book¹ recalls a well-known Congregational chapel in which the minister reads selections from the New Testament 'in Dr. Weymouth's translation.' Dr. Weymouth's translation may be, and no doubt is, excellent; but his name is incongruous, and, taken in conjunction with the names of the Evangelists and that of St. Paul, strikes a jarring note. The Liberal clergy will not break the law—this would be to adopt the platform of their opponents—nor will they innovate. In spite of here and there a dark corner and an inconvenient passage, most of us would rather live in an historical house—into which, however, we should introduce bathrooms and electric light—than exchange it for a villa run up by a speculative builder, and fitted with every modern convenience. So in religion. The traditional element is not to be dismissed out of hand. It is often better to explain than to expurgate, and to interpret than to change.

Both in 'Richard Meynell' and in 'Robert Elsmere' Mrs. Ward does less than justice to the historical Broad Church party. It had, and has, its limitations. It was academic; it had a certain aridity; its work was to a great extent indirect. But it kept knowledge alive; and knowledge, after all, is a necessary condition of theology and, in the long run, of religion, take what shape it will. The Liberal English Churchman stands in a great succession. He differs in two vital respects from the Catholic Modernist; the ground on which he stands is solid, and his hands are free. He may have faith in the future; for the stream on which he is launched flows to no inland bay or land-locked channel, but to the open sea. There the venture of life awaits him. The position cannot be better stated than in Mrs. Ward's words.

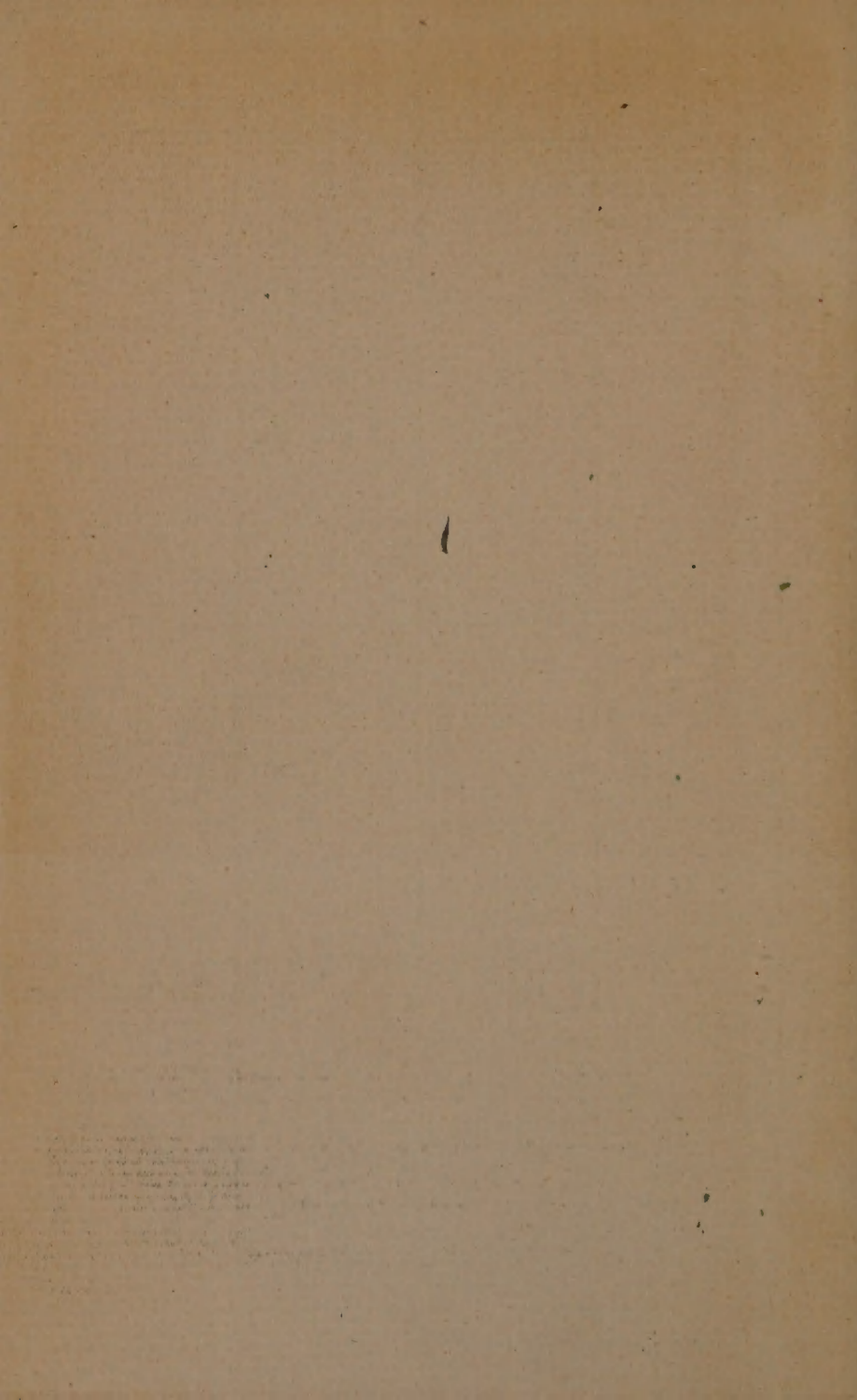
Suddenly, as a shaft of light from the descending sun fled ghostlike across the plain, touching trees and fields and farms in its path, two noble towers emerged among the shadows—characters, as it were, that gave a meaning to the scroll of nature. They were the towers of Markborough

¹ P. 45.

Cathedral. Meynell pointed to them as he turned to his companion, his face still quivering under the strain of feeling.

‘Take the omen ! It is for *them*, in a sense—a spiritual sense—we are fighting. They belong not to any body of men that may chance to-day to call itself the English Church. They belong to *England*—in her aspect of faith—and to the English people !’¹

¹ *Richard Meynell*, p. 73.



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